SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

2

勝木 光

Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

KCM3968

KC

Baby Steps ベイビーステップ 2

勝木 光

講談社

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SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

人生を変える夏が始まる――!!

漫画家になりたいと思い始めた頃、
ちょうどテニスをやっていました。
人生何事も無駄にはならないと思います。
たぶん…あの失敗も、
あのイタイ思い出もきっと……。

勝木 光

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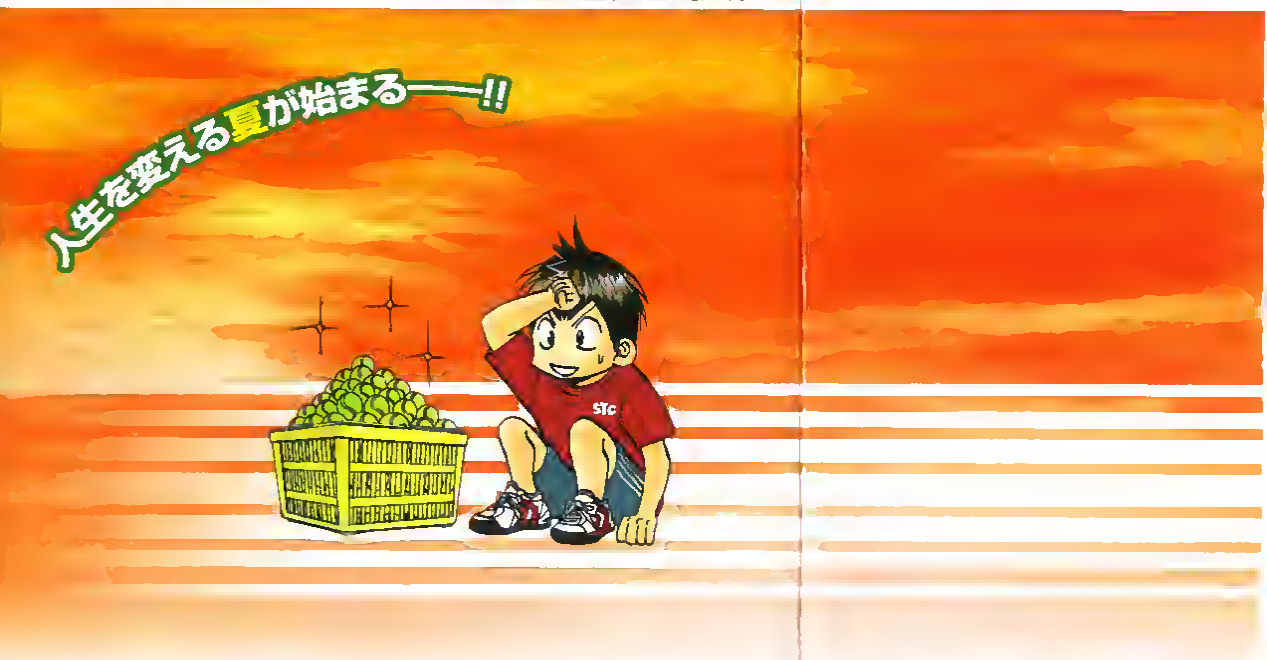


KC 勝木 光 作品

ベイビーステップ 1 ～以下続刊

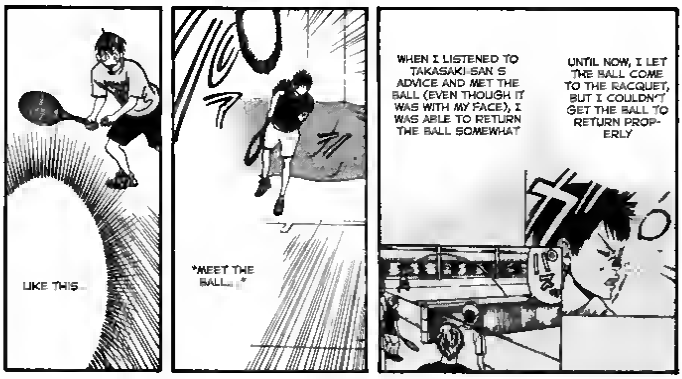
Cover Design／Veia

2008 3

Baby Steps

2

ベイビーステップ


LIKE THIS...
MEET THE BALL...
WHEN I LISTENED TO TAKASAKI-SAN'S ADVICE AND MET THE BALL (EVEN THOUGH IT WAS WITH MY FACE), I WAS ABLE TO RETURN THE BALL SOMEWHAT
UNTIL NOW, I LET THE BALL COME TO THE RACQUET, BUT I COULDN'T GET THE BALL TO RETURN PROPERLY

#6: CAN YOU SEE IT?

Aaah!

Woah!

SFX: BAM

Watch where you're hitting the ball!

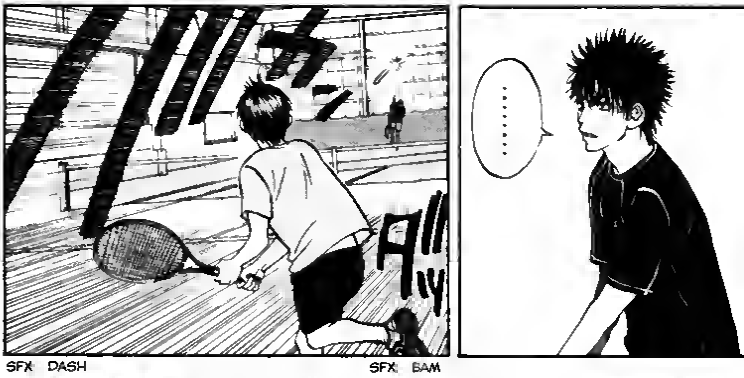
That's it!!

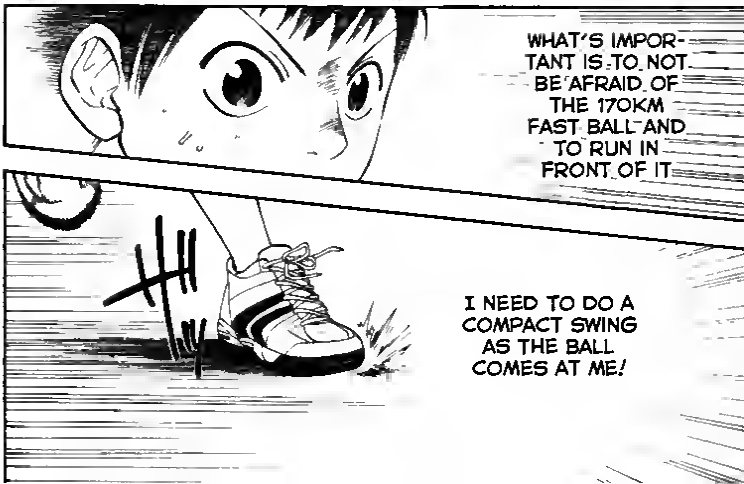
I finally got the ball to go forward!!

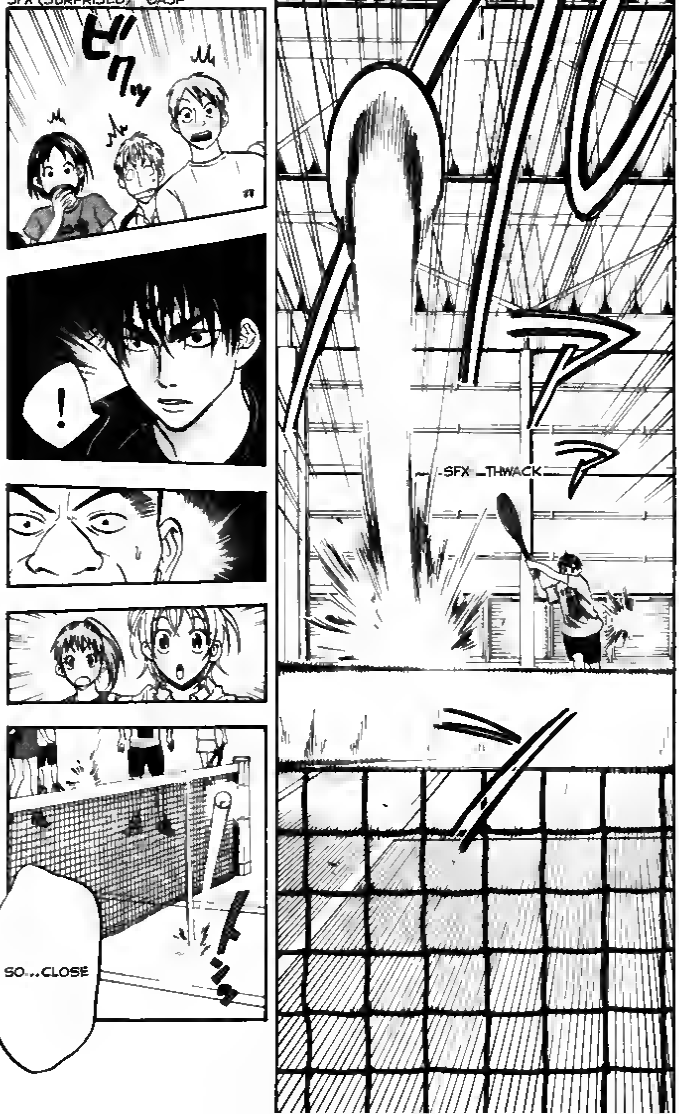
IF YOU "MEET THE BALL", THAT MEANS YOU STEP INTO THE BALL'S PATH AND USE YOUR INERTIA AND THE WEIGHT OF YOUR BODY WHEN HITTING THE BALL!!

IT WON'T WORK IF ALL YOU DO IS CHASE AFTER THE BALL AND SWING YOUR RACQUET AROUND!!

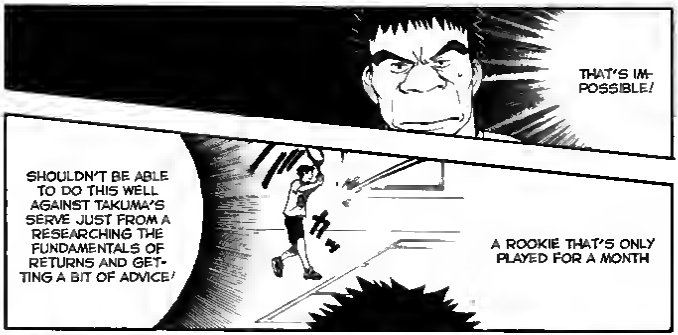
HE'S IN HIS OWN LITTLE WORLD
WHAT'S HE WRITING?
HE'S WRITING IN HIS NOTEBOOK AGAIN...
HM... I SEE... INSTEAD OF MOVING THE RACQUET, YOU NEED TO MOVE YOUR BODY INTO THE PATH OF THE BALL... HM.....OK.....
フフフフ
カキカキカキカキ
SFX: WRITE WRITE WRITE
SFX: HEH HEH HEH HEH


SFX: DASH
SFX: BAM
.....

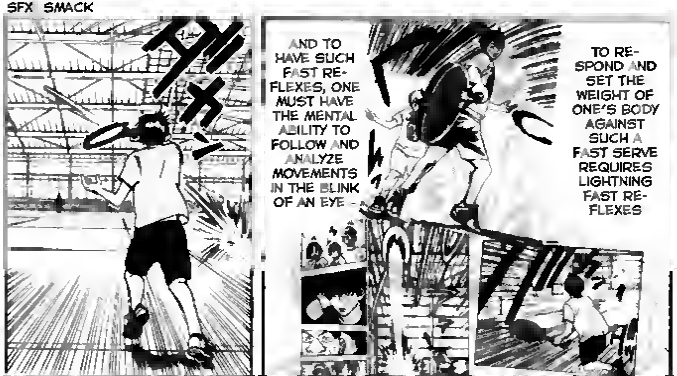

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS TO NOT BE AFRAID OF THE 170KM FAST BALL AND TO RUN IN FRONT OF IT
I NEED TO DO A COMPACT SWING AS THE BALL COMES AT ME!


SFX (SURPRISED) GASP
!
~~SFX THWACK~~
SO...CLOSE

HOW'S THIS HAP-PENING?
YOU'RE AWE-SOME, E-CHAN!
WAS IT NAT-CHAN'S ADVICE THAT HELPED HIM?
OH MY GOD...HE'S ACTUALLY STARTING TO RETURN THE BALL?
NO WAY!
OREGON


THAT'S IM-POSSIBLE!
SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THIS WELL AGAINST TAKUMA'S SERVE JUST FROM A RESEARCHING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF RETURNS AND GET-TING A BIT OF ADVICE!
A ROOKIE THAT'S ONLY PLAYED FOR A MONTH

SFX SMACK


AND TO HAVE SUCH FAST RE-FLEXES, ONE MUST HAVE THE MENTAL ABILITY TO FOLLOW AND ANALYZE MOVEMENTS IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE
TO RE-SPOND AND SET THE WEIGHT OF ONE'S BODY AGAINST SUCH A FAST SERVE REQUIRES LIGHTNING FAST RE-FLEXES

JUST HOW WELL
SFX: BAM
SFX: SLAM
CAN THAT BOY SEE THE BALL?
SFX: BAM

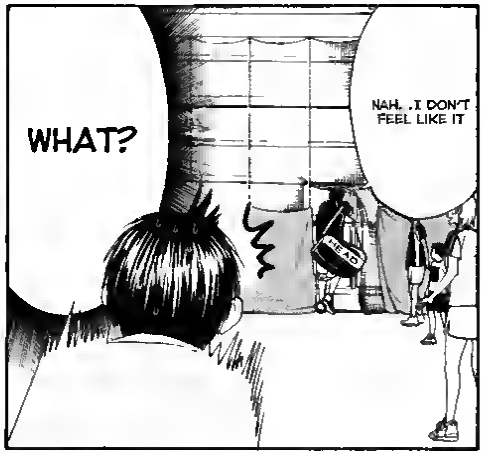
Out!
You almost got that in!
うぉぉ
WOW!
YOU'RE INCREDIBLE, E-CHAN!
SFX: BAM
SFX: WOAH
SFX: BOUNCE
It's getting closer to being in the court!
SFX: BONK
IF I DO EVERY-THING RIGHT, I'LL DEFINITELY RETURN THE SERVE!!
TRANSFER THE WEIGHT OF MY BODY INTO A COMPACT SWING TOWARD THE BALL!!
I'VE GOT THE RHYTHM NOW!!
I THINK I'VE GOTTEN USED TO THE SPEED!!
NEXT TIME
JUST A LITTLE MORE!
OREGON

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT E-CHAN'S ACTUALLY GOING TO RETURN THE BALL?
DON'T BE STUPID! I CAN'T EVEN RETURN TAKUMA'S SERVE!
BUT... DON'T YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE?
THE LAST BALL
ゴク!

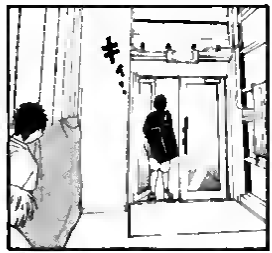
SFX: DASH
!?
Ha!
SFX (HEART POUNDING): BA-BUMP BA-BUMP

WHAT?
AH
UGH
SLICE SERVE ?

ターン
HUH? IS IT OVER?
FROM ANY-THING I'VE SEEN BEFORE
IT WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT
IT-IT SWERVED?
CHANGED DIREC-TION?
WHAT WAS THAT?
EXCUSE ME...WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
スタスタ
HUH?
NOOOOOOOOO
YOU HAVE TO LET ME HIT YOU ONCE
SFX WALK WALK

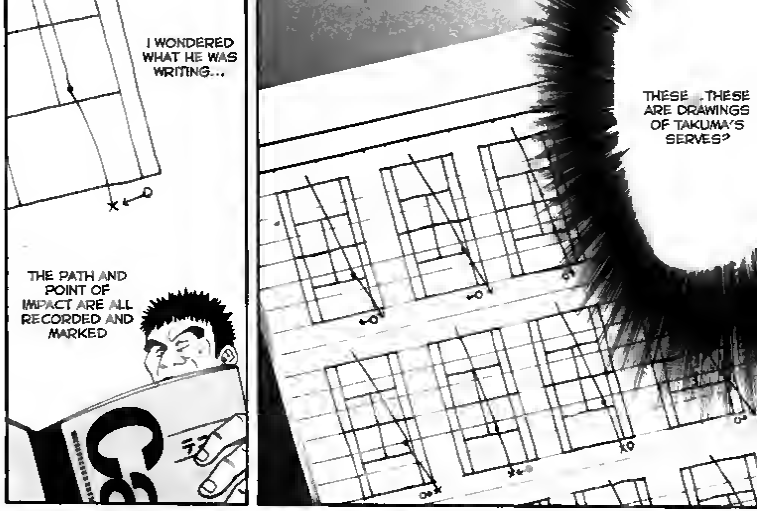


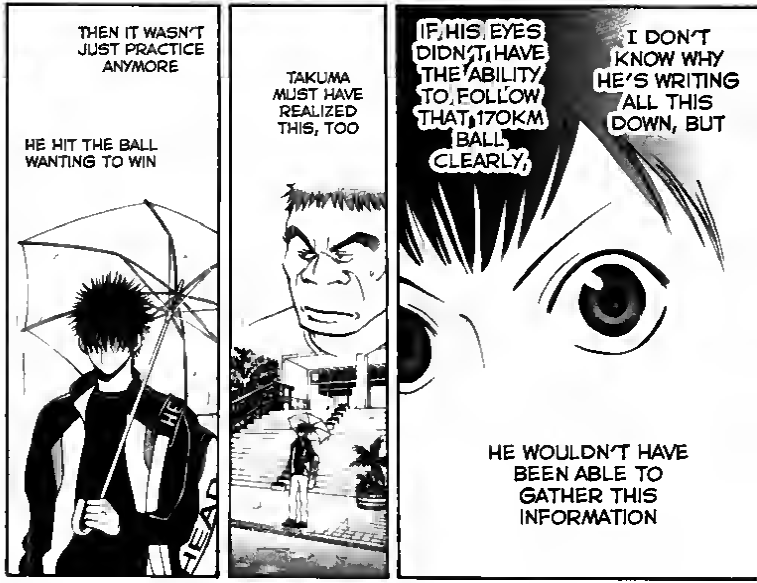
SFX WOBBLE

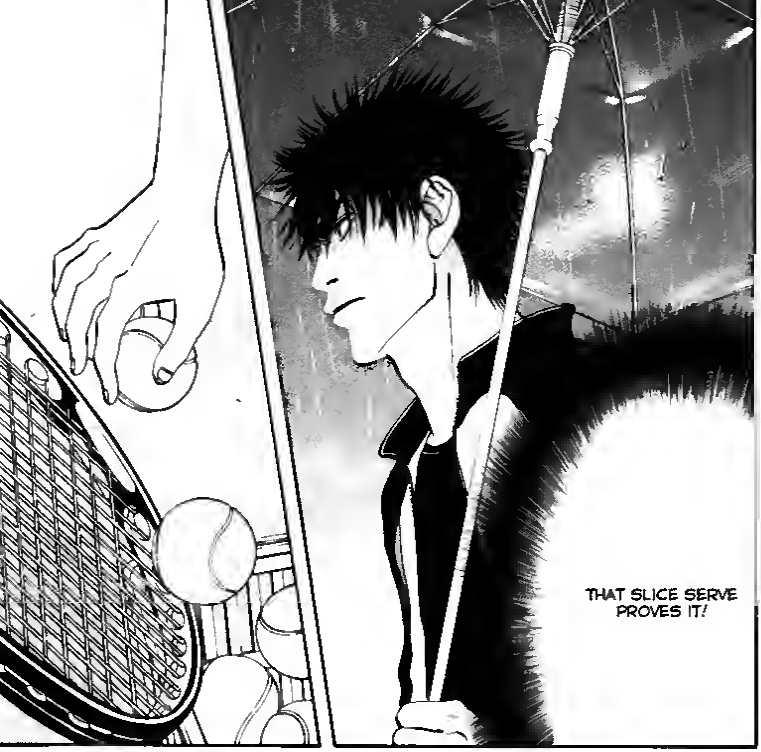


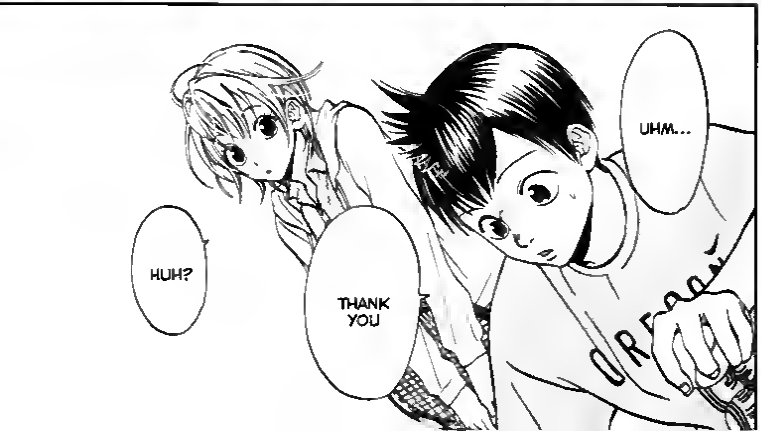
SFX CREAK

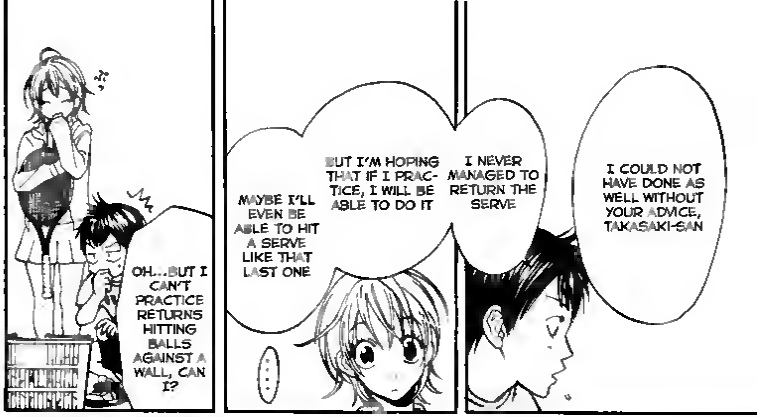
SO TAKUMA DID END UP WINNING AFTER ALL
BUT WHAT'S UP WITH THAT LAST BALL BEING A SLICE SERVE?
OK, IT'S OVER!! GET BACK TO PRACTICE!
THAT'S NOT TAKUMA'S STYLE AT ALL
What?
OH, SPEAKING OF WHICH...
E-CHAN, HOW DID THIS WHOLE THING GET STARTED? THIS FIGHT WITH TAKUMA?
SERIOUSLY, WHAT IS UP WITH THAT GUY...
E-chan?
I NEVER DID FIND OUT WHY HE GOT SO MAD
!!
Campus
Campus

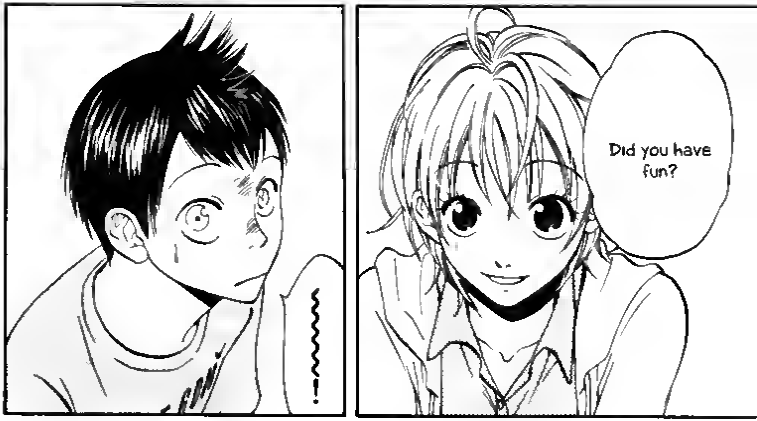

I WONDERED WHAT HE WAS WRITING...
THE PATH AND POINT OF IMPACT ARE ALL RECORDED AND MARKED
THESE... THESE ARE DRAWINGS OF TAKUMA'S SERVES?


THEN IT WASN'T JUST PRACTICE ANYMORE
HE HIT THE BALL WANTING TO WIN
TAKUMA MUST HAVE REALIZED THIS, TOO
IF HIS EYES DIDN'T HAVE THE ABILITY TO FOLLOW THAT 170KM BALL CLEARLY,
I DON'T KNOW WHY HE'S WRITING ALL THIS DOWN, BUT
HE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER THIS INFORMATION


THAT SLICE SERVE PROVES IT!


UHM...
HUH?
THANK YOU


I COULD NOT HAVE DONE AS WELL WITHOUT YOUR ADVICE, TAKASAKI-SAN
I NEVER MANAGED TO RETURN THE SERVE
BUT I'M HOPING THAT IF I PRACTICE, I WILL BE ABLE TO DO IT
MAYBE I'LL EVEN BE ABLE TO HIT A SERVE LIKE THAT LAST ONE
...
OH...BUT I CAN'T PRACTICE RETURNS HITTING BALLS AGAINST A WALL, CAN I?


Did you have fun?
WWW!

THAT WAS AN INTERESTING MATCH
?
C. COACH?
MARUO-KUN
THE "KANAZAWA JUNIOR CIRCUIT" IS NEXT MONTH
JUNIOR CIR-CUIT"?
REGON

That's awesome E-chan!
Wow! You're finally going to compete E-chan!
GOOD LUCK
IT'S A COMPETITION THAT THE KANTO REGION TENNIS LEAGUE SPONSORS
I'M SURE YOU'RE GETTING TIRED OF DOING NOTHING BUT PRACTICE SO I THOUGHT THAT YOU'D MIGHT LIKE TO ENTER
COM-PETE...
MY FIRST COMPETITION ...!!
E- CHAN! YOUR NOSE IS BLEEDING!
AAA AHH HHH H

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TRANSLATED BY:
GACHIMAYA

EDITED BY:
PUREMADNISS

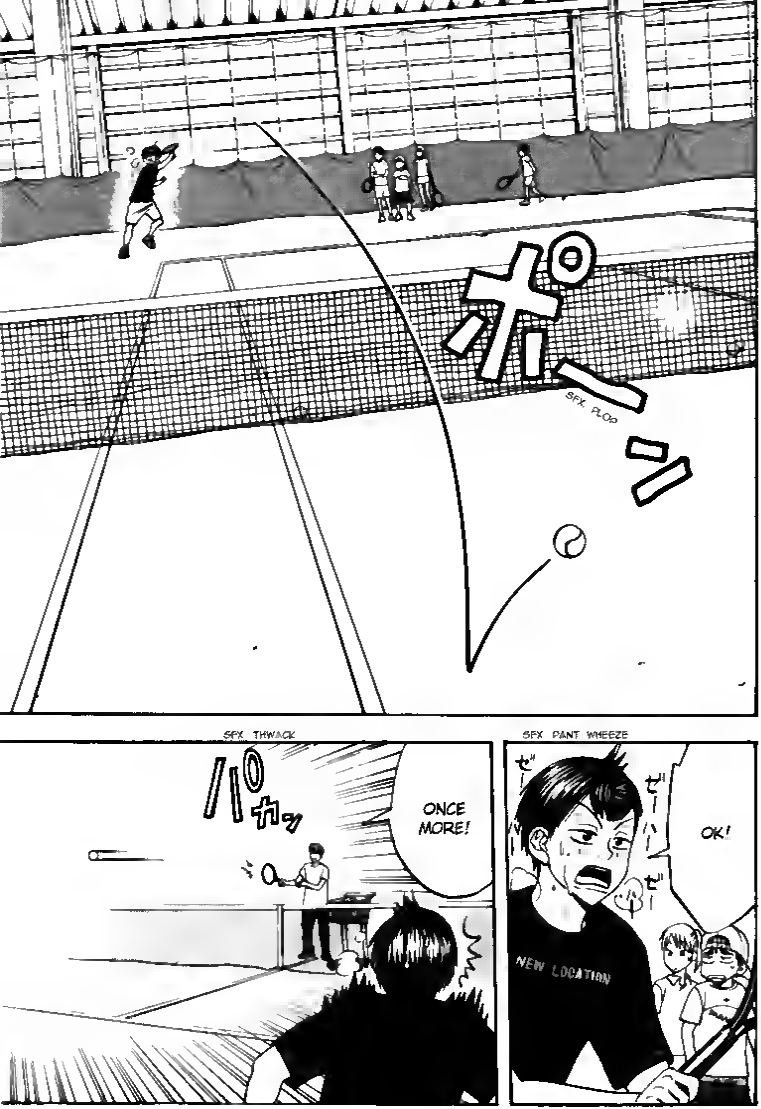
PROOFREADED BY:
WORLDCON

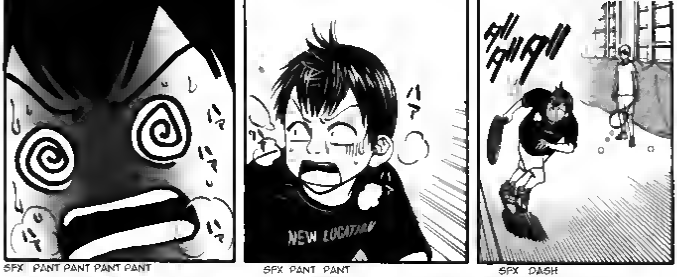
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, JULY HAS ARRIVED -
7 THE LIFE-CHANGING NATSU (SUMMER)
人生を変えるナツ
*TRANSLATOR NOTE: NATSU MEANS SUMMER, BUT IS ALSO TAKASAKI'S FIRST NAME. IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE, THEY DON'T USE THE KANJI FOR NATSU SO IT WILL BE A DOUBLE-MEANING (THE NAME AND SUMMER)
DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS, THERE IS AN AURA OF NERVOUSNESS DURING STC PRACTICES.
IT'S BECAUSE THE JUNIOR (18 AND UNDER) TENNIS COMPETITORS GET TOGETHER DURING THIS TIME.

IT'S A BATTLE-FIELD OF INTENSITY ON A COURT!!

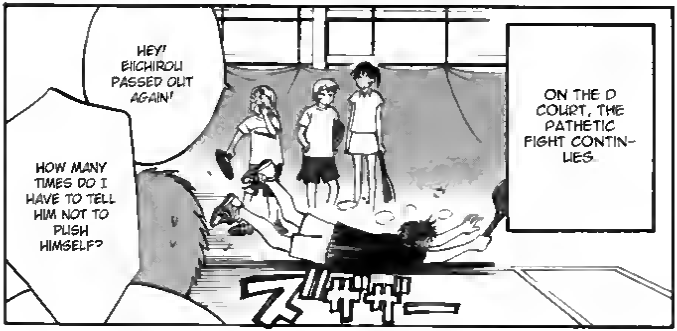
I'M WORKING TOWARD MY FIRST COMPETITION, WHICH IS IN 2 WEEKS
AND IN THE MIDST OF THIS INTENSITY,

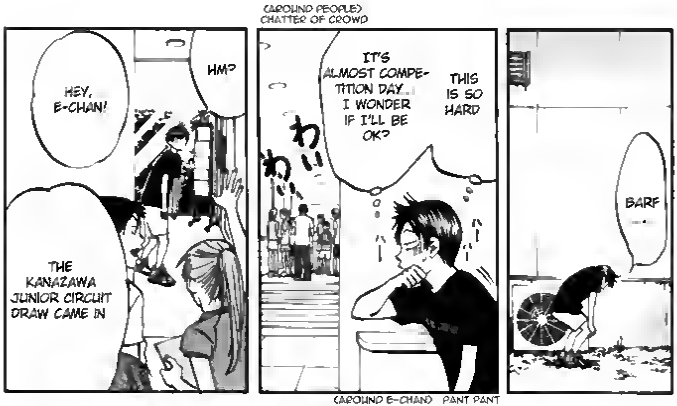
GOOD STANCE AND FIRM GRIP.
NEW LOCATION
SFX: PANT, WHEEZE
SMOOTH SWING.
HIT WITH A THWACK !!!


ポーン
SFX: PLOP
SFX: THWACK
パカッ
ONCE MORE!
SFX: PANT WHEEZE
ゼー
ゼーハー
ゼー
OK!
NEW LOCATION

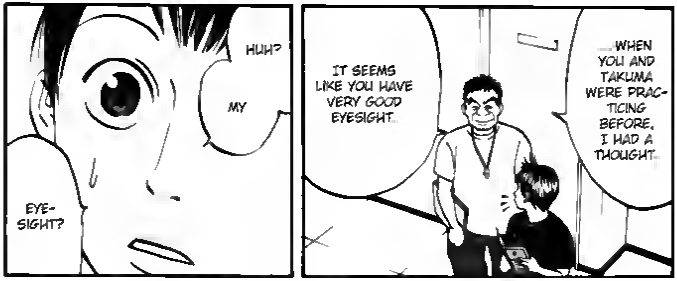


SFX: PANT PANT PANT PANT | SFX: PANT PANT | SFX: DASH


HEY! EIICHIROU PASSED OUT AGAIN!
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL HIM NOT TO PUSH HIMSELF?
ON THE D COURT, THE PATHETIC FIGHT CONTINUES.
ズザザー



IT'S THE LINEUP !!
OH!
!!
HERE'S YOURS, MARUO-KUN
DRAW?
I'M REALLY GOING TO DO THIS...
KANAGAWA JUNIOR


HUH?
MY EYE-SIGHT?
IT SEEMS LIKE YOU HAVE VERY GOOD EYESIGHT.
...WHEN YOU AND TAKUMA WERE PRACTICING BEFORE, I HAD A THOUGHT.

UNDER 80 PRESSURE

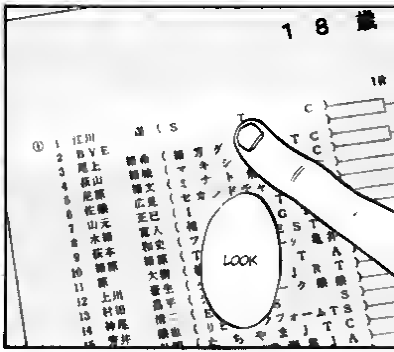
SPY SMILE

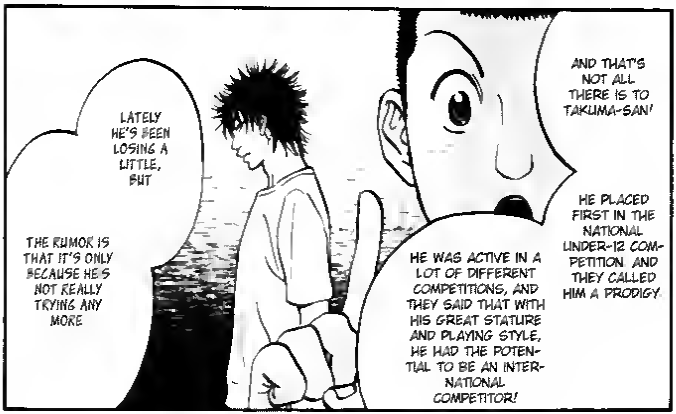
OH...DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS OOBAYASHI PERSON?
SURE! I DON'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT HIM, THOUGH
SERIOUSLY THOUGH, YOU'RE STARTING RIGHT OFF WITH A PRETTY TOUGH ONE, AREN'T YOU MARUO-KUN?
OH, HI I'M B COURT, FUKAZAWA YUUKICHI THAT'S FU-KA-ZAWA, GOT IT?
WHAT?
ピク
SFX: BLAB BLAB
SEE HERE? THIS NUMBER 5 IN A CIRCLE MEANS THAT HE'S A NUMBER 5 SEED.
60 赤耶 弥勒 (ケン
61 張 聡 (狛江
62 能登 誠次 (伊
63 丸尾 栄一郎 (S
⑤ 64 大林 良 (梅
HE'S A PRETTY GOOD PLAYER, SEE? HE'S SEEDED HIGH THIS TIME TOO
WHAT DOES HE MEAN HE DOESN'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT HIM?
HE STARTED PLAYING TENNIS IN JUNIOR HIGH, JOINED UMEDA TENNIS CLUB WHILE ALSO PLAYING IN HIS SCHOOL'S TENNIS CLUB. AND THIS YEAR HE WAS IN THE TOP 8 OF THE INTERHIGH PREFECTURAL COMPETITION
LET'S SEE...HE'S THE CO-CAPTAIN OF HIS SCHOOL'S TENNIS CLUB. AND HE MOSTLY COMPETES SINGLES ON HIS TEAM BUT ALSO PLAYS A STRONG DOUBLES GAME. HIS PLAY STYLE IS STRONG ON SERVES AND VOLLEYS, BUT HIS PERSONALITY IS ONE OF QUIET COMPOSURE
ペラペラペラ
ペラペラペラ
SLAH SLAH SLAH SLAH SLAH SLAH SLAH
HE RANKED IN THE TOP 8 IN THE PREFECTURAL COMPETITION.
HE CAN SERVE AND VOLLEY, AND
SO HE'S A NUMBER 5 SEED. HE'S A TENNIS CLUB CO-CAPTAIN.
UHM...

WHAT?
YOU CHALLENGED TAKUMA-SAN!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

STARTED ONLY 3 MONTHS AGO
PLAYING IN D COURT WITH LITTLE KIDS
DOESN'T UNDERSTAND PLAY STRATEGIES
THERE'S NO WAY THAT I CAN BEAT HIM.

HE'S TOP SEED!!
THAT 1 MEANS...


18
LOOK


AND THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS TO TAKUMA-SAN!
HE PLACED FIRST IN THE NATIONAL UNDER-12 COMPETITION AND THEY CALLED HIM A PRODIGY
HE WAS ACTIVE IN A LOT OF DIFFERENT COMPETITIONS, AND THEY SAID THAT WITH HIS GREAT STATURE AND PLAYING STYLE, HE HAD THE POTENTIAL TO BE AN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITOR!
LATELY HE'S BEEN LOSING A LITTLE, BUT
THE RUMOR IS THAT IT'S ONLY BECAUSE HE'S NOT REALLY TRYING ANY MORE

*TRANSLATOR NOTE: ANIKI = BIG BROTHER

MAY I CALL YOU ANIKI?

PLEASE, DON'T!

SERIOUSLY THOUGH, I ADMIRE YOU!! YOU'RE ON D COURT AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE A WALLFLOWER LIKE ME, BUT THEN YOU TOOK ON THAT TAKUMA-SAN WITH SUCH CONFIDENCE!!

WHAT THE HELL WAS I THINKING, TAKING HIM ON?

NOW HE REALIZES T

I KNEW HE WAS GOOD, BUT

I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THAT AMAZING

THE TENNIS LEAGUE COMPETITIONS ARE DIVIDED INTO LEVELS BASED ON THE GRADE OF THE COMPETITION.

GRADE?

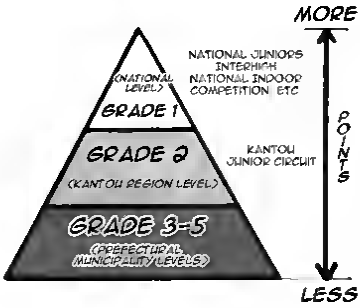
WELL, THE KANAZAWA JUNIORS IS ONLY A GRADE 4, SO TAKUMA-SAN PROBABLY ISN'T TAKING IT TOO SERIOUSLY.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM MUCH LATELY.

MAYBE HE'S PRACTICING SOMEWHERE ELSE

BY THE WAY, WHERE IS TAKUMA-SENPAI TODAY?

THE GOAL OF OUR STC'S BEST PLAYERS IS TO GET ENOUGH POINTS AND KEEP INCREASING THEIR NATIONAL JUNIORS RANKING, THEN COMPETE IN AND WIN THE NATIONAL JUNIORS



IF YOU WIN AT A HIGHER GRADE COMPETITION, YOU GET POINTS AND YOUR JUNIOR RANKING GOES UP

.....
OF COURSE A COURT'S NAT-CHAN IS ALSO NO. 1 SEED IN THE UPCOMING COMPETITION.
FIRST SEED!?
SHE'S BEEN PLAYING IN EVERY AVAILABLE COMPETITION LATELY, AND HER RANKING HAS GONE UP QUITE A BIT. THERE ARE EVEN QUITE A FEW TOP SEEDS IN THE 12 AND UNDER DIVISION ALSO, LIKE YUUKI.
I'M ACTUALLY A NO. 6 SEED MYSELF.
OH...
EVERYONE HERE IS AMAZING!
I THOUGHT THIS WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE TOO.
OK EVERYONE! TIME TO GATHER UP THE BALLS!
I PASS OUT DURING PRACTICE AND I CAN'T EVEN BEAT YUUKI. ON TOP OF THAT, MY OPPONENT IS RANKED AS A NO. 5 SEED. I THOUGHT I WANTED TO COMPETE WHEN I WAS PRACTICING, BUT
CONCENTRATE, E-CHAN!
AH
COMPARED TO THEM, I'M...

I JUST DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIDENCE.
SFX: RUSH
CHAN!
AAGH!
E-
HEY-
SFX: CRASH
I'M SO SORRY I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE YOU THAT MUCH
TA... TAKASAKI-SAN?
What are you doing?
SFX: ROLL ROLL ROLL ROLL

HUH?
OH..UH..
YOU WERE STARING OFF INTO SPACE.
WHAT'S WRONG?
BUT YOU DON'T EVER FEEL THAT WAY, DO YOU TAKASAKI-SAN?
YOU'RE THE BEST PLAYER AND YOU'RE A NUMBER 1 SEED.
WHAT?
OH! I KNOW, RIGHT BEFORE A MATCH YOU GET ALL ANXIOUS, RIGHT?
I WAS THINKING OF THE COMPETITION
AND WONDERING IF I SHOULD EVEN BE ENTERED.
HUH?

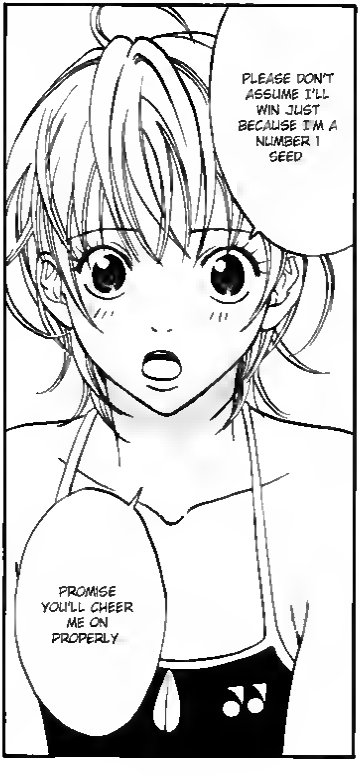
OF COURSE, I GET NERVOUS TOO,
BECAUSE EVERYONE SAYS THINGS LIKE THAT.
OF COURSE, WHEN YOU'RE TOP SEED, EVERYONE EXPECTS YOU TO WIN, SO THERE'S AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PRESSURE.
BUT THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT I'LL WIN SOMETIMES I MAY NOT BE FEELING WELL OR I MAY JUST HAVE A BAD GAME AGAINST MY OPPONENT, YOU KNOW
AND WHEN YOU'RE ON THE TENNIS COURT, NO ONE ELSE CAN HELP YOU.
INTERESTING...
TAKASAKI-SAN ALWAYS SEEMS SO INVINCIBLE...

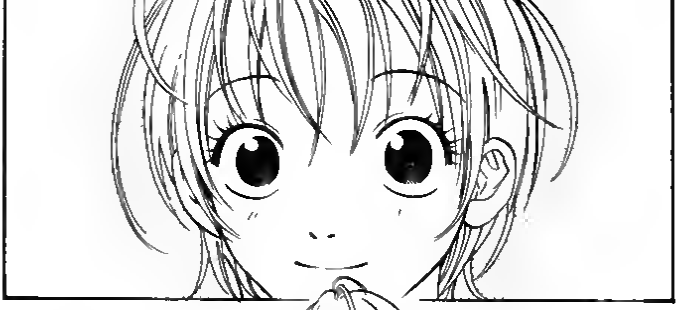
O OK!!
HANDS
HANDS
PROMISE YOU'LL CHEER ME ON!
WHAAAAT?
がしっ
E-CHAN!

SFX BEAB

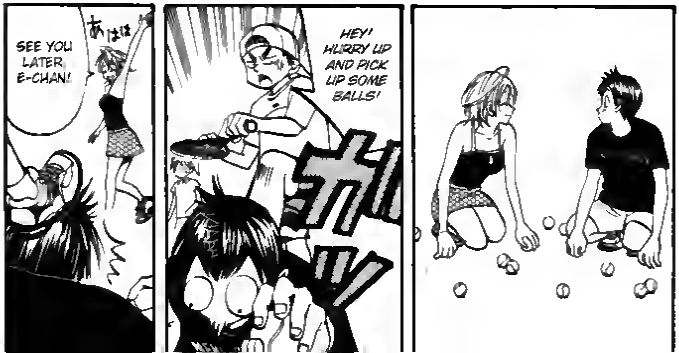
NEW LOCATION

I...I WILL


PLEASE DON'T ASSUME I'LL WIN JUST BECAUSE I'M A NUMBER 1 SEED
PROMISE YOU'LL CHEER ME ON PROPERLY



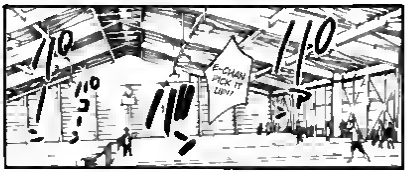
I'LL CHEER YOU ON TOO!
I PROMISE!


SEE YOU LATER E-CHAN!
あはは
HEY! HURRY UP AND PICK UP SOME BALLS!
ポン

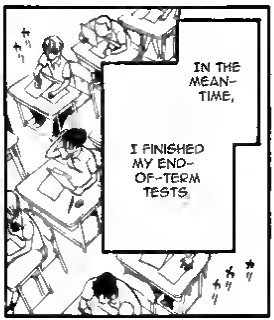
ドキ
ドキ
Hurry it up Eiichirou!
NEW LOCATION
PARADE
SO EVEN SOMEONE WHO PLAYS AS WELL AS TAKASAKI-SAN FEELS NERVOUS AND ANXIOUS BEFORE COMPETING...
パシーン
IT'S NATURAL TO BE NERVOUS ABOUT YOUR FIRST COMPETITION
THAT'S RIGHT
IN TENNIS, YOU FIGHT TO WIN BY YOURSELF
I PROMISE!
I'LL CHEER YOU ON TOO!
OK!!
I'VE GOT TO PRACTICE HARDER!!
NEXT WE'LL PRACTICE ALTERNATING LEFT AND RIGHT STROKES!
OK! I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND, AND FOR THE TIME BEING I'LL JUST GIVE IT MY ALL AND TRY MY BEST

RIGHT NOW, THAT'S ALL I CAN DO!!

HE'S HAD IT


E-CHAN PICK IT UP!!

AND TRANSITIONED SMOOTHLY INTO SUMMER VACATION


IN THE MEAN-TIME,
I FINISHED MY END-OF-TERM TESTS.

THE DAY BEFORE THE COMPETITION
EIICHIROU! YOUR TENNIS COMPETITION IS TOMORROW, RIGHT?
WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR MOTHER TO COME WATCH YOU PLAY?
NO THANKS, MOM! IT'S NOT LIKE AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIELD DAY!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE ENJOYING YOURSELF, BUT HOW ARE YOUR STUDIES GOING?
YOU CAN'T ALLOW YOUR GRADES TO SUFFER.
I KNOW.
OK I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU, EIICHIROU.
I WONDER... WHAT IS A COMPETITION LIKE?
AND WHAT IS OOBAYASHI RYOU LIKE?
AND FINALLY,
THE LIFE-CHANGING SUMMER BEGINS.

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SOMEHOW THIS CHAPTER WAS SO LONG IN THE WORKS, WITH THE ORIGINAL EDITOR OUT OF THE PICTURE I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHO THE RAW PROVIDER IS. IF IT'S YOU PLEASE CONTACT US IN OUR IRC CHANNEL ^^

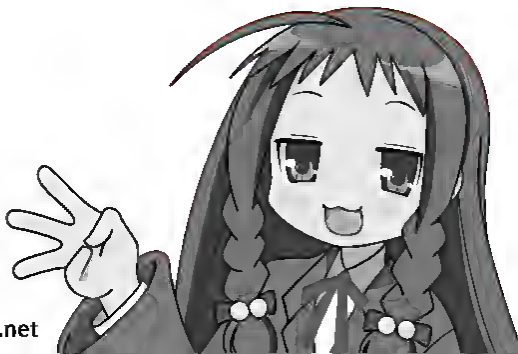
TRANSLATOR: GACHIMAYA
CLEANER: JOETHEFROG
PROOFER: WORLDCON
TYPESETTER: POOKY-TAN
QC: FUTARI

HELLO FANS~

I know some of
you were eagerly
awaiting this chapter~

We're still recruiting,
experienced cleaners
to help out on projects
like good ending or
medaka box would
come in handy :D

FUTARI APPROVED



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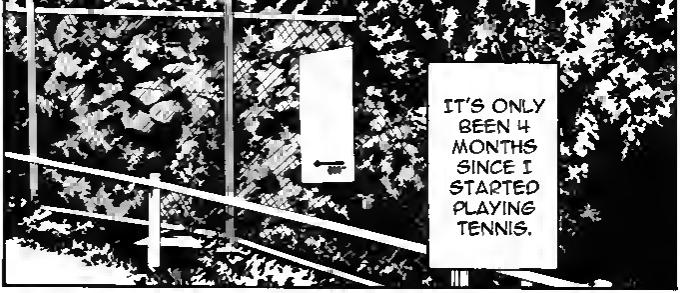
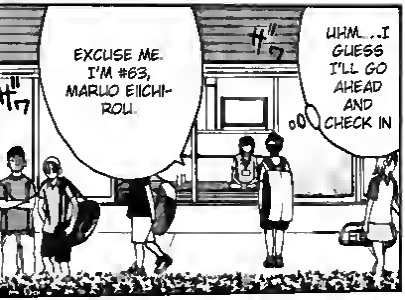


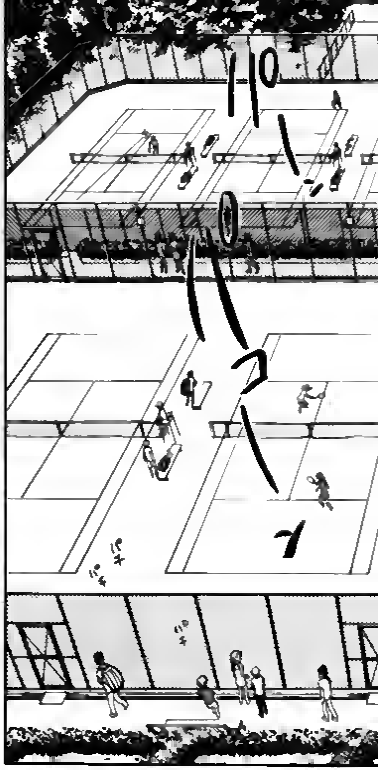
8
NOT THE USUAL PLACE

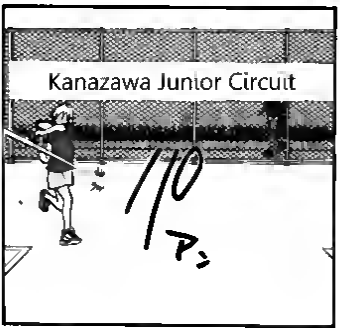
KANAZAWA JUNIOR TOURNAMENT, DAY 1
Numbers 27 and 28 of the 18 and under males division, please report to Court #5.
Players previously using the court, please bring your balls and report to the main office.
Court #2—
DIAMOND

I CAME EARLY JUST IN CASE, BUT I THINK I MAY HAVE COME TOO EARLY
I'm supposed to play at #00

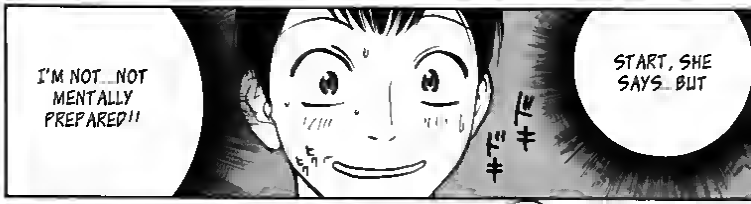

EXCUSE ME. I'M #63, MARUO EIICHIROU.
UHM...I GUESS I'LL GO AHEAD AND CHECK IN

WELCOME, AND GOOD MORNING, MARUO-KUN.
GOOD MORNING
KANAZAWA JUNIOR TENNIS CIRCUIT
OH?




Kanazawa Junior Circuit

I'M SORRY, BUT WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO START A BIT EARLIER?
WHAT?
UH... Y...YES!
YOUR OPPONENT, OOBAYASHI-KUN, HAS ALSO CHECKED IN.

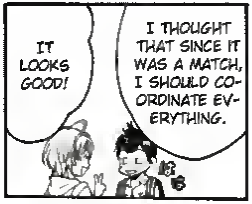

START, SHE SAYS... BUT
ドキドキ
I'M NOT...NOT MENTALLY PREPARED!!

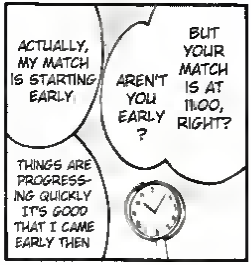
OOBAYASHI-KUN!
!?
YES?
YOUR OPPONENT, MARUO-KUN, HAS ARRIVED, SO WHY DON'T YOU STEP INTO THE NEXT OPEN COURT?
THEY'RE SAYING THAT IT MIGHT START RAINING TODAY, SO WE'RE TRYING TO PUSH THINGS ALONG
.....

THIS PERSON IS OOBAYASHI RYOU!!
OF COURSE
HEY, OOBAYA-SHI, IS THAT YOUR FIRST OPPO-NENT?
HE DOESN'T LOOK FA-MILIAR
YES. THANK YOU
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.
THEY'LL AN-NOUNCE YOU TWO LATER GOOD LUCK
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'D BE GOOD
What should I do?
The match will start early?
YOU'RE LUCKY HE'S OBVIOUSLY OUT OF HIS LEAGUE HERE.
LOOK AT HIM. AND THE MATCH HASN'T EVEN STARTED YET

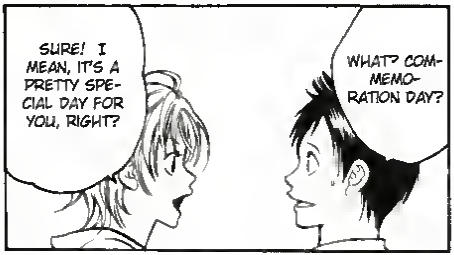
EICHAN!
!?
YEAH, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. HE'S FROM STC, AFTER ALL.
YOU'RE STARTING OFF EASY.
HEY--!
TA... TAKASAKI-SAN!!
WHAT? YOU MEAN THIS?
ニヤ
WELL, WELL...LOOK AT YOU!
OH

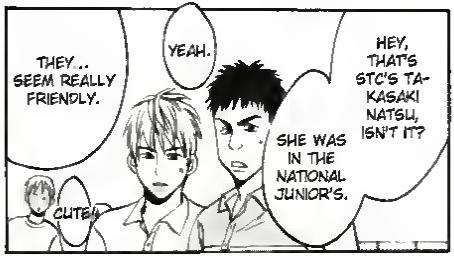
I ALMOST MISSED YOUR COMMEMORATION DAY.


I THOUGHT THAT SINCE IT WAS A MATCH, I SHOULD CO-ORDINATE EVERYTHING.
IT LOOKS GOOD!

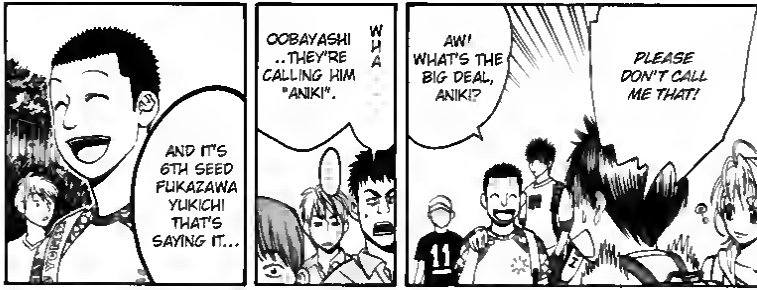

BUT YOUR MATCH IS AT 11:00, RIGHT?
AREN'T YOU EARLY?
ACTUALLY, MY MATCH IS STARTING EARLY.
THINGS ARE PROGRESSING QUICKLY IT'S GOOD THAT I CAME EARLY THEN

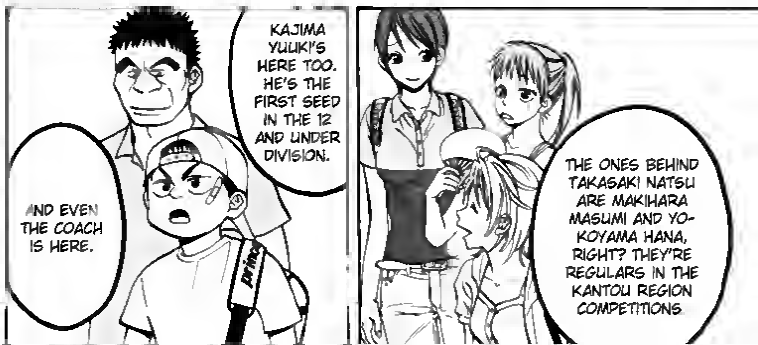
OH,
THEY'RE HERE!


WHAT? COMMEMORATION DAY?
SURE! I MEAN, IT'S A PRETTY SPECIAL DAY FOR YOU, RIGHT?


HEY, THAT'S STC'S TAKASAKI NATSU, ISN'T IT?
SHE WAS IN THE NATIONAL JUNIOR'S.
YEAH.
THEY... SEEM REALLY FRIENDLY.
CUTE.

GOOD MORNING ANIKI!

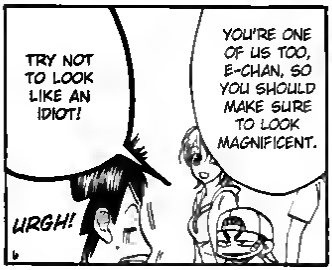

PLEASE DON'T CALL ME THAT!
AW! WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL, ANIKI?
WHA
OOBAYASHI ..THEY'RE CALLING HIM "ANIKI".
AND IT'S 6TH SEED FUKAZAWA YUKICHI THAT'S SAYING IT...

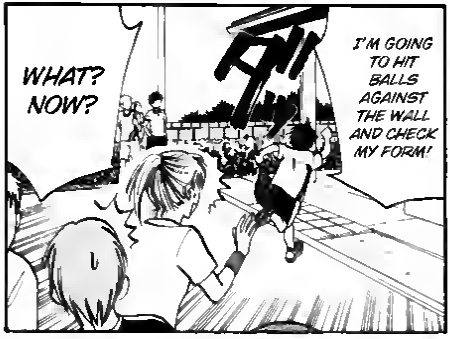

KAJIMA YUUKI'S HERE TOO. HE'S THE FIRST SEED IN THE 12 AND UNDER DIVISION.
AND EVEN THE COACH IS HERE.
THE ONES BEHIND TAKASAKI NATSU ARE MAKIHARA MASUMI AND YOKOYAMA HANA, RIGHT? THEY'RE REGULARS IN THE KANTOU REGION COMPETITIONS

THERE HE IS...THAT'S EGAWA TAKUMA!!
HE'S HUGE!
BUT WHY'S HE IN THE KANAZAWA JUNIORS?
THE RUMOR IS THAT HE HASN'T BEEN DOING AS WELL LATELY.
LET'S GO WARM UP.
LATELY I KEEP PLAYING, SO MY BODY FEELS KIND OF STIFF.
YOU'RE UP SOON, ICHINOSE?
YEAH I'M GOING TO RUN FOR A BIT FIRST THOUGH.
ANYWAY, JUST DO YOUR BEST RYOU!
YEAH, DEFINI-TELY.
BEING IN THAT GROUP OF PEOPLE MAKES HIM LOOK REALLY STRONG.

WELL... FOR SOME REASON IN THIS AREA, WE SEEM TO BE GETTING A LOT OF ATTENTION
I GUESS... BUT IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE STC'S A PRETTY FAMOUS CLUB IN KANAGAWA.

WHAT'S WRONG, E-CHAN?


YOU'RE ONE OF US TOO, E-CHAN, SO YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE TO LOOK MAGNIFICENT.
TRY NOT TO LOOK LIKE AN IDIOT!
URGH!


I'M GOING TO HIT BALLS AGAINST THE WALL AND CHECK MY FORM!
WHAT? NOW?

NERVOUS
キンキョー
B-BMP
ドクドクドク
B-BMP
ドクドクドク

WHAT? WHICH IS IT?
NO, NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S BETTER IF HE CHECKS HIS FORM BEFORE HE PLAYS?
I SEE!
IF YOU MESS UP YOUR FORM, YOU'LL REGRET IT, SO WHY NOT JUST DO SOME LIGHT RUNNING INSTEAD?
IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR YOU TO PLAY
SLEEPING PERSON
I ALWAYS GO TO THE COURT AND WATCH THE MATCH BEFORE MINE
THERE'S NOT ENOUGH TIME. SHOULDN'T HE LISTEN TO SOME MUSIC AND RELAX A BIT?
HE SHOULD SWEAT A LITTLE
NAH, IT WOULD BE GOOD TO DO SOME LIGHT HITS
IF IT WAS ME, I'D JUST DO STRETCHES.
えっ
I'M SORRY E-CHAN!!
SEE! IT'S BECAUSE YOU GOT HIM WORKED UP!
OH NO! E-CHAN'S GONE FUNNY!

Number 63:
Maruo-kun
Number 64:
Oobayashi-kun
Please enter
Court #6.
わわわわ
W...W...
W...WHAT
DO I DO?
ALL YOU
CAN DO
NOW IS TO
GO TO THE
COURT.
THEN
I'M
GOING!
WAIT
E-CHAN!
YOUR
BAG!
IT'LL BE FINE!
RELAX! IT'S
NOT LIKE
YOU'RE DYING
OR ANYTHING.
OH
YEAH!
TAKE
SOME
DEEP
BREATHS
HEE
HEE
FUUUU
THAT'S
LAMAZE,
DUMMY!

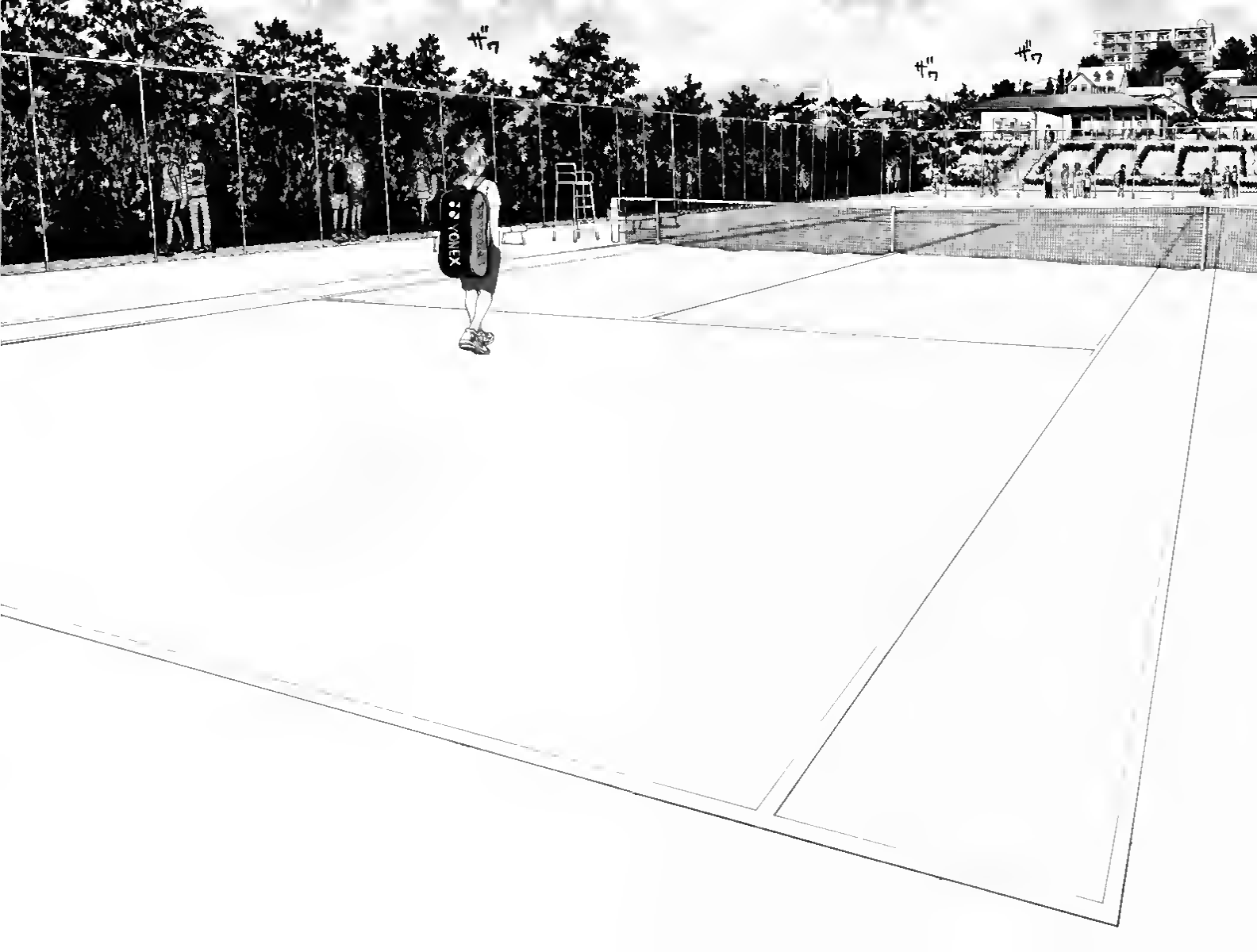
SFX: BANG
GWAHH!
SFX: TWITCH TWITCH
SFX: THUD
!?
WHA...

!
GET YOUR ASS MOVING!
MIW
MAYBE THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO HURRY UP FOR, BUT FOR NOW,
TAKUMA, YOU DO ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT OTHERS
IT WAS TOO LOUD AND I COULDN'T SLEEP.
I'M GOING!!
OK!
MIW

1) A GOOD STANCE
2) A SMOOTH SWING
3) HIT IT WITH A THWAP!!
THAT'S RIGHT.
RIGHT NOW, ALL I CAN DO IS

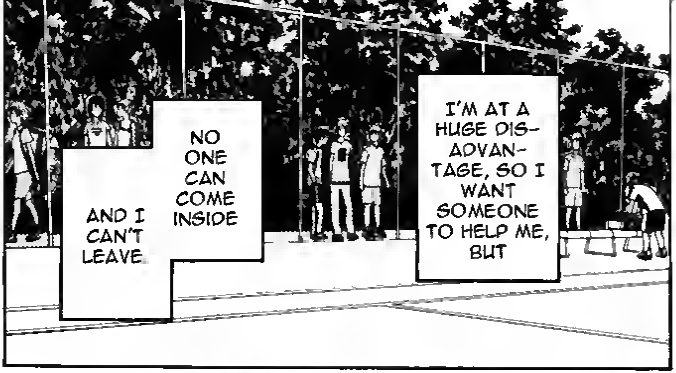
ALL I CAN DO IS TO TRY WITH ALL MY STRENGTH
I PRAC-TICED THIS WITH ALL MY STRENGTH EVERY DAY, SO

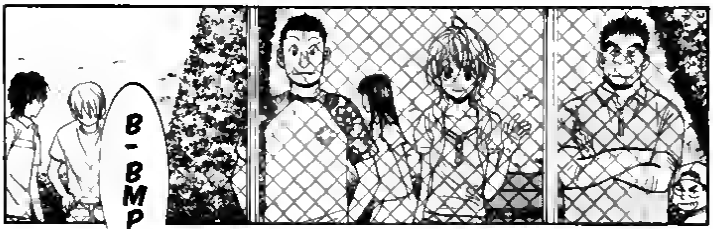
IF I DO THAT, THEN AS USUAL I SHOULD...

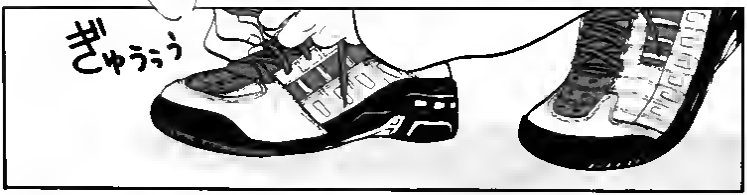

YONEX

B-BMP
IT SEEMS REALLY HUGE RIGHT NOW.
COURT SHOULD BE JUST LIKE THE USUAL COURTS, BUT

OOBA-YASHI RYOU. HIGH SCHOOL 2ND YEAR.
HE'S BEEN PLAYING TENNIS FOR 5 YEARS. HE'S THE CO-CAPTAIN OF THE TENNIS CLUB AT SHOUNAN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.
HE'S 5TH SEED, AND HIS STRENGTH IS HIS SERVE AND VOLLEY.
ドォン
はっ
AS FOR ME
I STARTED PLAYING 4 MONTHS AGO
prince
MY STRENGTH IS...UHM...A TEXTBOOK PERFECT STROKE (SORT OF)


I'M AT A HUGE DIS-ADVAN-TAGE, SO I WANT SOMEONE TO HELP ME, BUT
NO ONE CAN COME INSIDE
AND I CAN'T LEAVE


B-BMP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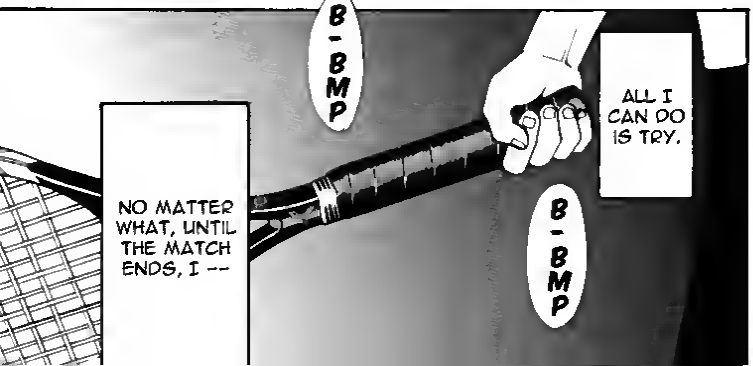
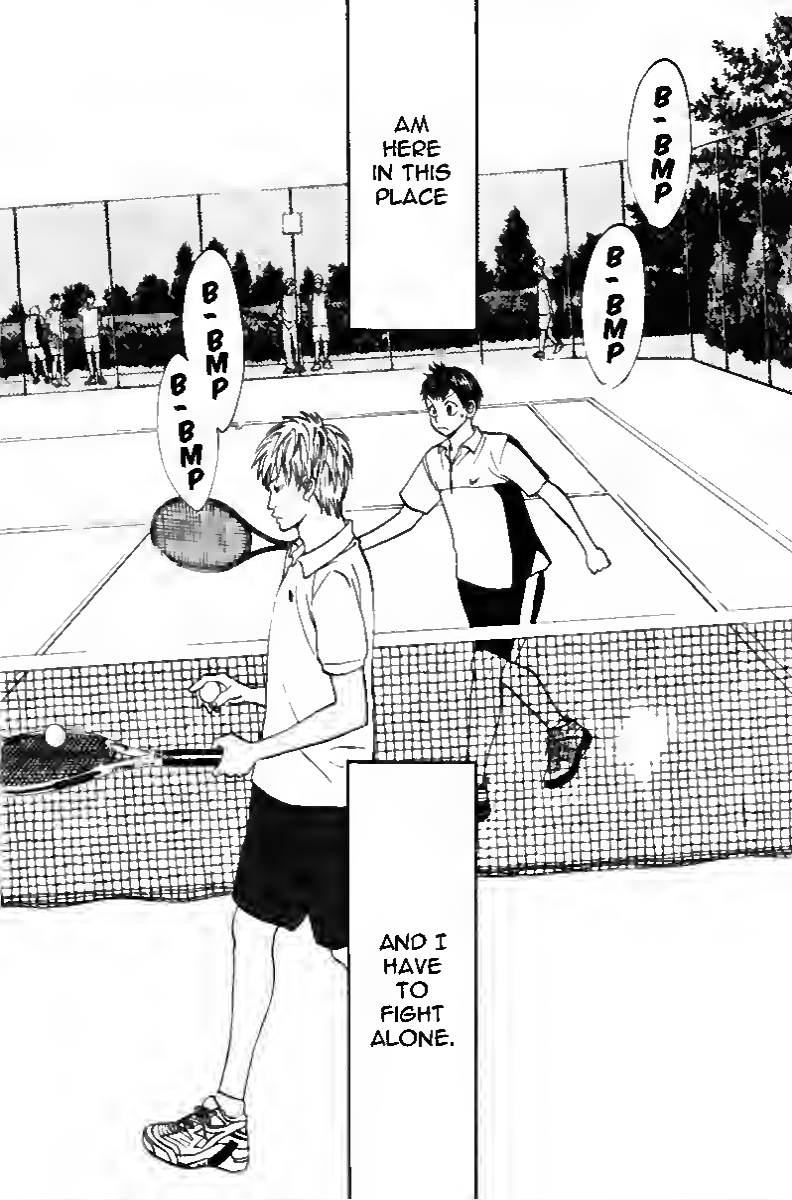

B-BMP
ALL I CAN DO IS TRY.
B-BMP
NO MATTER WHAT, UNTIL THE MATCH ENDS, I --


AM HERE IN THIS PLACE
B-BMP
B-BMP
B-BMP
B-BMP
AND I HAVE TO FIGHT ALONE.

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WE'RE STILL RECRUITING WHATEVER YOU CAN THROW AT US!
ENJOY~

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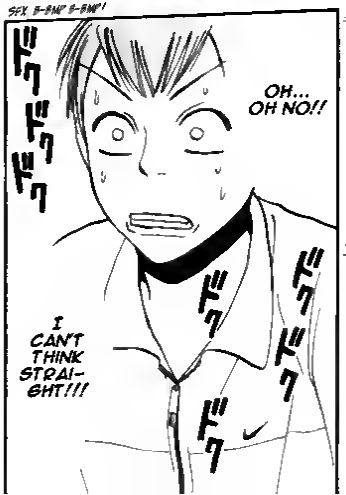
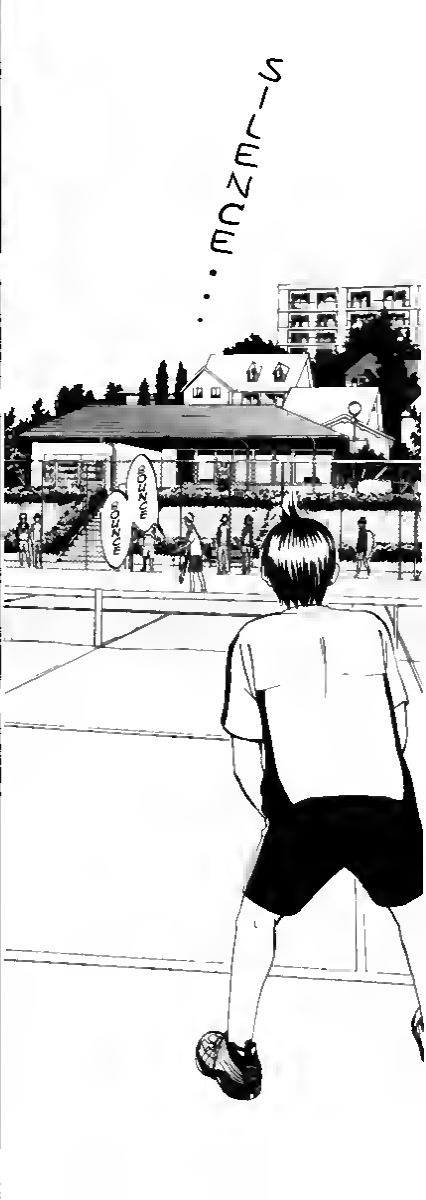
POOKY-TAN

QC:
FUTARI

9 WHAT?

STROKE... FORM?
WHAT?
FIRST... RETURN?
NO...!?
OH...
I...
WHAT?
WHAT DO I DO AGAIN?


SFX: B-BAM! B-BAM!
OH... OH NO!!
I CAN'T THINK STRAI-GHT!!!

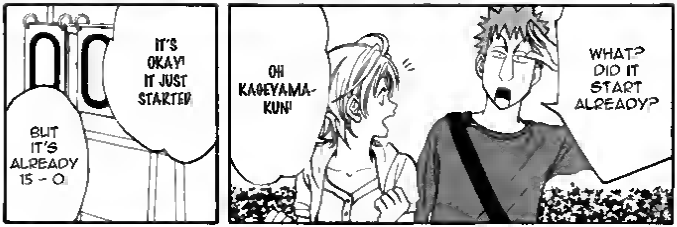

SILENCE...
DONNE
DONNE

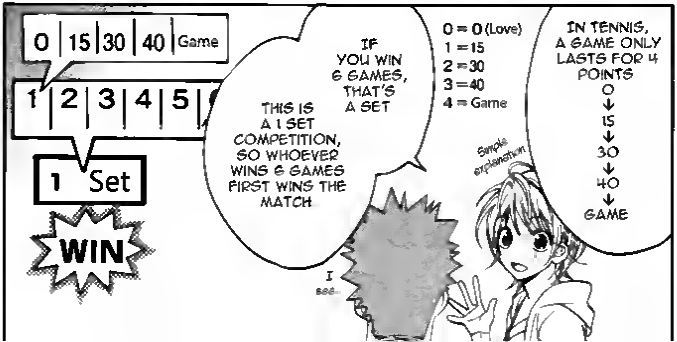
SFX BAM
は,

SFX: THWAP
SFX: BAM

R...
RETURN ACE!?
ッ!!
!?
HUH?
.....!!
HEY, HEY, HEY!! WHAT WAS THAT?
WHO IS THAT?
HE'S PLAYING 5TH SEED OOBA-YASHI!
WELL, THAT WAS UNEX-PECTED
WILL OOBA-YASHI BE OK?
IT WAS LUCK IT'S TOO SOON TO TELL.
Woah
STILL EVEN FOR A LUCKY SHOT
YOU'RE AWESOME E-CHAN!!

0 | 15
DID I UNDER-ESTIMATE HIM?
HOW... HOW DID I JUST HIT THAT?
BUT HE LOOKS PERPLEXED BY IT


BUT IT'S ALREADY 15 - 0.
IT'S OKAY! IT JUST STARTED
OH KAGEYAMA-KUN!
WHAT? DID IT START ALREADY?


0 | 15 | 30 | 40 | Game
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
1 Set
WIN
THIS IS A 1 SET COMPETITION, SO WHOEVER WINS 6 GAMES FIRST WINS THE MATCH
IF YOU WIN 6 GAMES, THAT'S A SET
I see.
0 = 0 (Love)
1 = 15
2 = 30
3 = 40
4 = Game
Simple explanation
IN TENNIS, A GAME ONLY LASTS FOR 4 POINTS
0
↓
15
↓
30
↓
40
↓
GAME

!!
0—30
FWAH!
BUT THAT SERVE WAS GOOD!
NO, THAT RETURN WAS BETTER!!
!!
RETURN ACE AGAIN!?
NO WAY!?
MY BODY IS MOVING ON IT'S OWN!
I DID IT AGAIN...! I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW, BUT

HE'S AMAZINGLY LUCKY, ISN'T HE?
E-chan I mean
IT'S NOT LUCK.
EVERY-ONE IN STC KNOWS ABOUT IT.
AFTER HE WAS UNABLE TO RETURN TAKUMA'S SERVE
HE PRACTICED RETURNS RELENT-LESSLY
E-CHAN'S SPECIALTY IS HIS REPETITIVE PRACTICE OF TENNIS FUNDAMEN-TALS.
HE'S PRACTICED IT SO OFTEN THAT HE MOVES AUTO-MATICALLY TOWARD THE BALL.

HIS BODY HAS MEMORIZED THE RHYTHM OF AN IDEAL RETURN.

C
OH YEAH, HE'S ALWAYS HAD REALLY GOOD EYES
I BELIEVE THAT MARUO-KUN ALSO HAS INCREDIBLE EYESIGHT.
THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS TO IT
YOU NEED VISUAL POWER FOR "MOVEMENT" TO DISCERN HOW THINGS MOVE, FOR "DEPTH" TO GET A SENSE OF DISTANCE, AND FINALLY FOR "SPEED" TO DISCERN THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
IT'S NOT JUST EYESIGHT, BUT FOR TENNIS HE NEEDS TO HAVE VISUAL POWER
WHEN A BEGINNER WITH THAT ABILITY INTERACTS WITH A FAST BALL CORRECTLY,
THE ABILITY TO DISCERN MOVEMENT IS EVEN SEEN IN QUITE A FEW PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT PARTICULARLY ATHLETIC
IF OUT OF THOSE THREE, YOU HAVE STRONG VISUAL POWER FOR "MOVEMENT", THEY SAY YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO HIT A STRONG, FAST BALL.
THAT BALL

IS RETURNED AS A FAST BALL.
ドッ
!
0—40!

TSU
!!
FURTHER-MORE, HE'S LUCKY BECAUSE
HE WAS EXPOSED FIRST TO TAKUMA'S SERVE, AND THAT IS WHAT HAS BEEN IMPRINTED IN HIS MIND.
DAAHH!
WHAT HE'S DOING IS NOT A FLUKE

Break: To win a game when the opponent is serving

Court Change
I'M SURE THAT EVEN OOBAYASHI CAN'T BELIEVE THINGS TURNED OUT THIS WAY...
Y...YOU DON'T THINK THAT A 5TH SEED WOULD BE KNOCKED OUT AFTER THE FIRST ROUND, DO YOU?
BUT HE GOT 4 POINTS IN A ROW FROM OOBAYASHI. THAT'S UNUSUAL.
WHY DOESN'T ANYONE KNOW HIM?
BE-CAUSE HE'S NEVER WON BEFORE
THEY SAID IT'S STC'S MARUO EIICHIROU
I HAVE TO CHANGE AND FIGHT HARDER...
METRIC
そわ そわ そわ そわ
SHIT!! NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT HIM, HE JUST DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE COULD DO TOO MUCH, BUT
YEAH!!
WAY TO GO, E-CHAN!

MAYBE SOMEONE LIKE HIM COULD ACTUALLY BE A MAJOR TALENT IN THE TENNIS WORLD
HE'S A SERIOUS TYPE SO HE DOESN'T DO HALF-ASSED PRACTICES

AMAZING! HE'S DEVELOPED MUCH FASTER THAN I THOUGHT HE WOULD!!

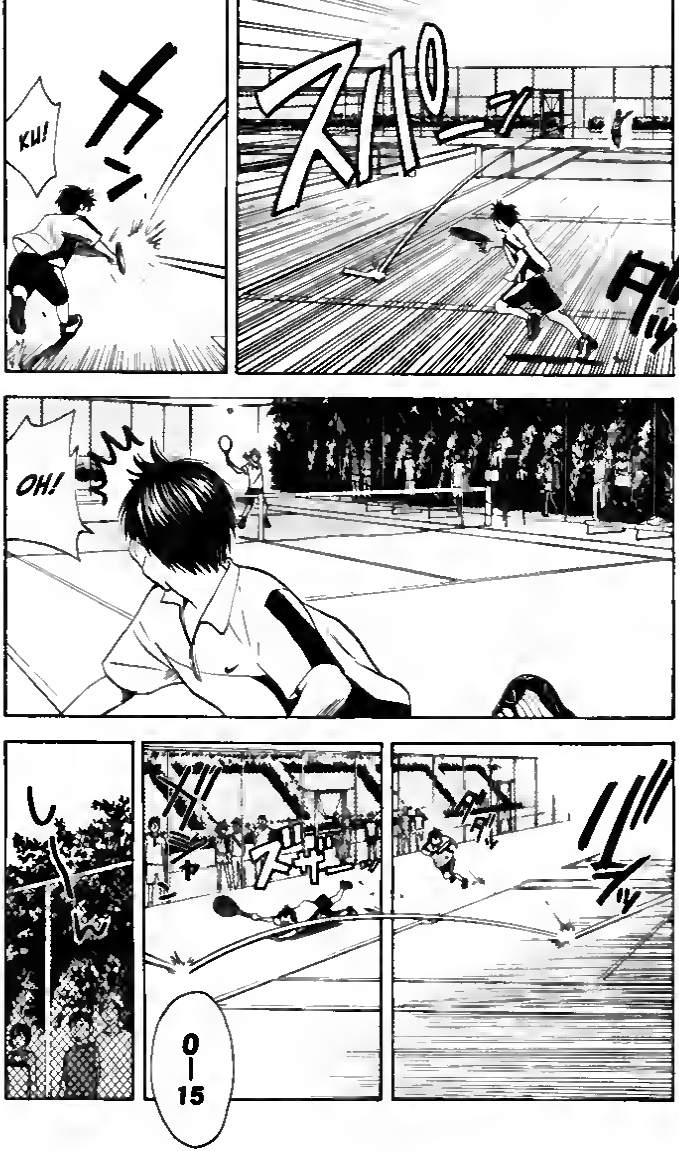
NO YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT!!
NAH IT CAN'T BE THAT EASY

IF HE BEATS A SEEDED PLAYER IN HIS FIRST MATCH, THEN HE'LL SUDDENLY BE FAMOUS...

IT COULD HAPPEN!! AT LEAST, IN THIS SERVE GAME SITUATION...

1 - 0,
Marou
leads
ドキ
ドキ
ドキ
ぐっ
ゴク..

UMPH!
SFX: POING
...
WHAT?
...
HUH?
W... WHAT'S WITH THIS WOBBLY SERVE?
トラン


KU!
OH!
0
15

あ～ん
THAT WAS A PRETTY NICE SERVE FOR ME
OOOH
HE'S NOT BEING SERIOUS, IS HE?
THAT WAS A CHANGE
UHM...
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT SERVE?
WHEN HE RETURNS A BALL, HE USES THE STRENGTH OF HIS OPPONENT'S HIT AGAINST THEM
HOWEVER, WHEN IT COMES TO HIS SKILL AT SERVING...
I'D SAY THAT MARUO-KUN DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH EXPERIENCE
SO HIS VISION IS GOOD, BUT HE CAN'T WIN ON THAT ALONE THAT'S WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO
I SEE...
SO THAT'S THE STORY.

A SERVE LIKE THAT IS USELESS AGAINST A 5TH SEED PLAYER
うーん
OF... OF COURSE IT MAKES SENSE
E-CHAN
!
GET YOUR ASS MOVING!
MAYBE THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU DON'T HAVE TO HURRY UP FOR, BUT...
TA...TAKUMA-SEMPAI!!

I DID MORE THAN I EXPECTED ON MY RETURNS!! I EVEN WON A GAME!!
WE'LL SEE HOW FAR I CAN GET BY JUST DOING WHAT LITTLE I KNOW TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY!!
THE ONLY THING I CAN DO NOW IS THIS!
THAT'S RIGHT!
THERE'S DEFINITELY MORE THAT I CAN DO!!

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BABY STEPS CHAPTER 9

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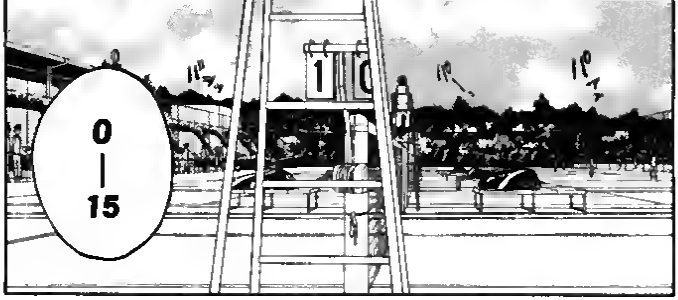
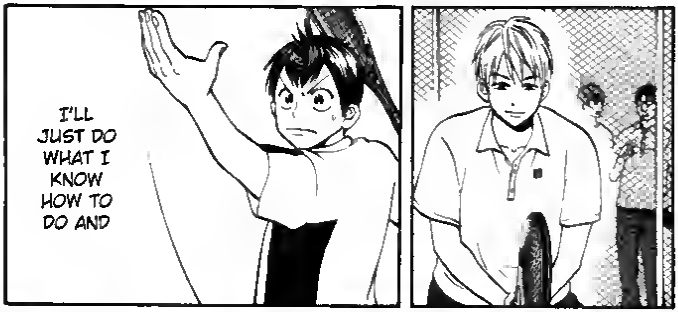
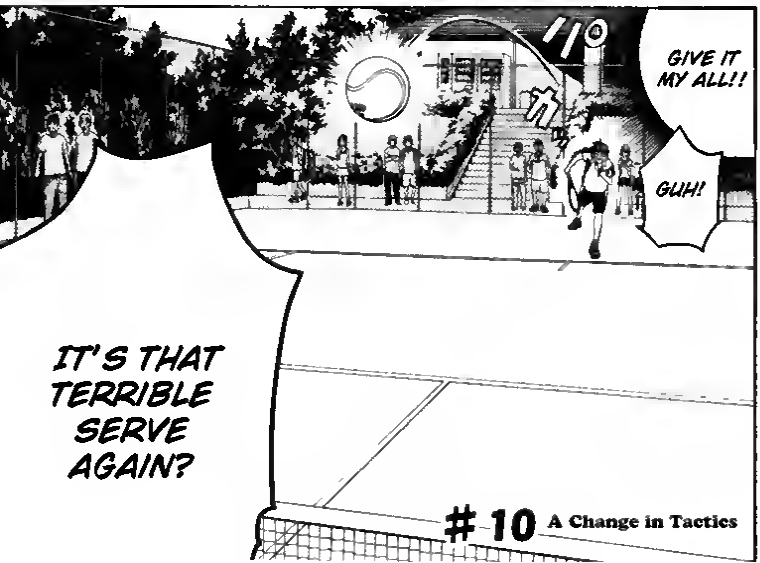
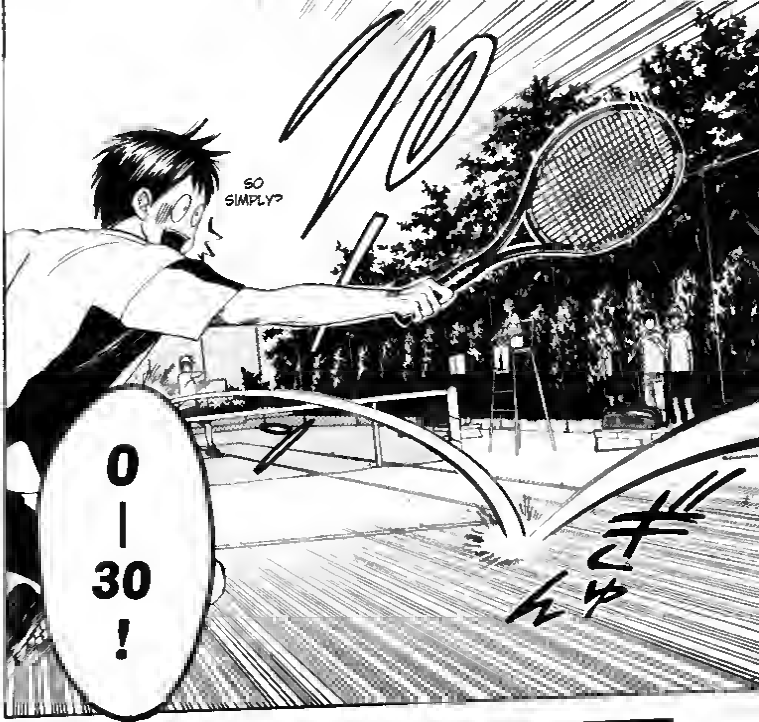
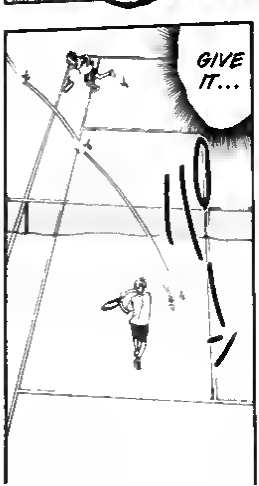


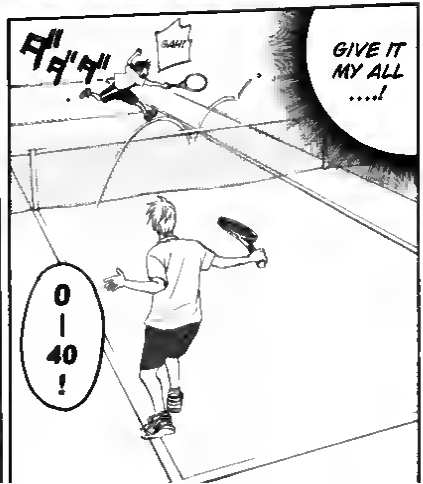




10 A Change in Tactics


SO SIMPLY?
0 — 30 !


GIVE IT...


SMAT
GIVE IT MY ALL ....!
0 — 40 !

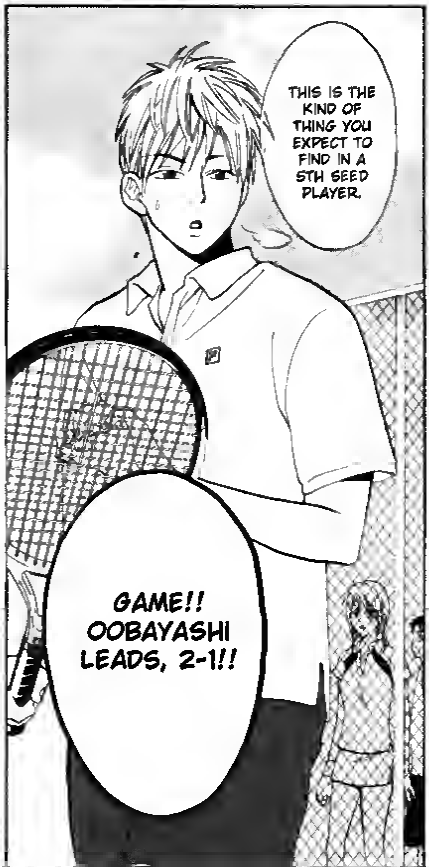
GAME, OOBAYASHI 1-1!
IT ONLY TOOK A SECOND FOR HIM TO CATCH UP!!
IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT.
SO IF THAT'S THE CASE...
B-, BUT NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME TO RETURN.
IT WENT WELL LAST TIME!!
COME ON...!!

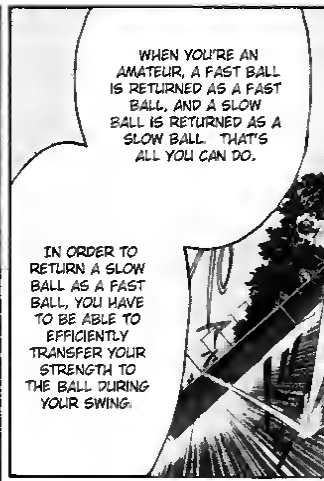
!?
HUH?
② SMOOTH STROKE AND...
OOBAYASHI'S REDUCED HIS SERVE SPEED?
WHAT IS HE DOING?
IT'S YOUR CHANCE, E-CHAN !!
GO!!

WHAT?
ぽこーん
GAH!
15—0
!?
WHAT HAPPENED? HIS RETURNS WERE AWESOME IN THE FIRST GAME!!
He sucks!

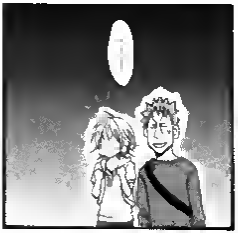
IT'S THE OPPOSITE OF THE LAST TIME.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

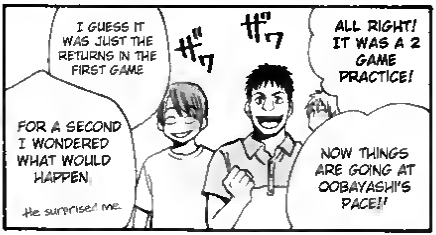
WELL, IT MAKES SENSE.


THIS IS THE KIND OF THING YOU EXPECT TO FIND IN A 5TH SEED PLAYER.
GAME!! OOBAYASHI LEADS, 2-1!!


WHEN YOU'RE AN AMATEUR, A FAST BALL IS RETURNED AS A FAST BALL, AND A SLOW BALL IS RETURNED AS A SLOW BALL. THAT'S ALL YOU CAN DO.
IN ORDER TO RETURN A SLOW BALL AS A FAST BALL, YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO EFFICIENTLY TRANSFER YOUR STRENGTH TO THE BALL DURING YOUR SWING.

AFTER BECOMING AWARE OF MARUO-KUN'S LACK OF EXPERIENCE, HE'S USED THAT TO HIS ADVANTAGE BY ALTERING HIS TECHNIQUE



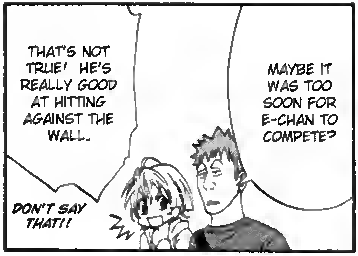

I GUESS IT WAS JUST THE RETURNS IN THE FIRST GAME
ALL RIGHT! IT WAS A 2 GAME PRACTICE!
FOR A SECOND I WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.
the surprise of me.
NOW THINGS ARE GOING AT OOBAYASHI'S PACE!!

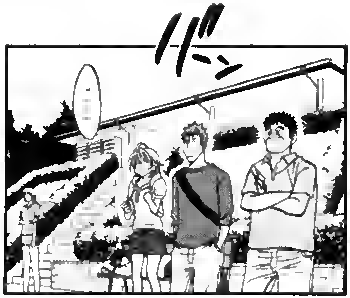
HE'S WRITING NOTES. HE'S STRANGE
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE? CAN I DO ANYTHING ELSE?
うーん
うーん
HE'S HITTING BOTH MY SERVES AND RETURNS WELL

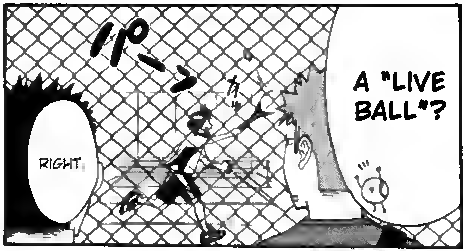
AMATEUR VS FIFTH SEED

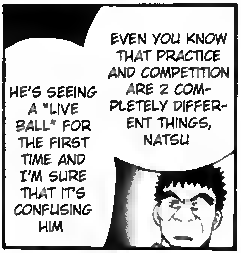
Smooth swing
Ah
THE DIFFERENCE IN STRENGTH WAS CLEAR FROM THE START OF THIS MATCH.
IT WAS IN THAT ONE MOMENT
THAT OOBAYASHI'S INSECURITIES FROM THINKING, "WHAT IF MY OPPONENT IS STRONGER THAN ME?" DISAPPEARED,

15—0
30—0
40—0
AND THE FLOW OF THE MATCH ACCELERATED.
GAME, OOBAYASHI
OOBAYASHI LEADS, 4-1!


THAT'S NOT TRUE! HE'S REALLY GOOD AT HITTING AGAINST THE WALL.
MAYBE IT WAS TOO SOON FOR E-CHAN TO COMPETE?
DON'T SAY THAT!!



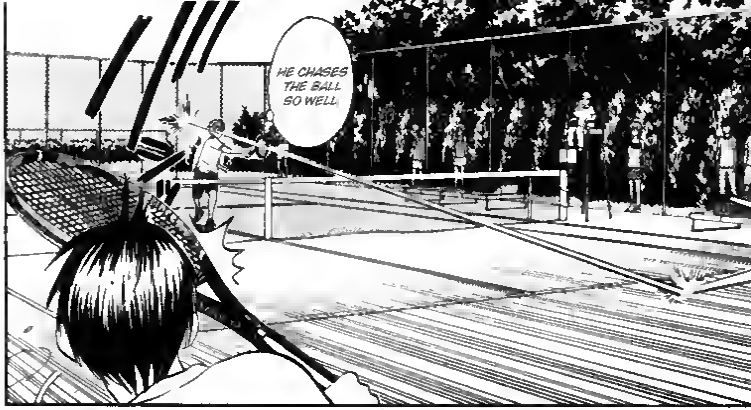

A "LIVE BALL"?
RIGHT.


EVEN YOU KNOW THAT PRACTICE AND COMPETITION ARE 2 COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THINGS, NATSU
HE'S SEEING A "LIVE BALL" FOR THE FIRST TIME AND I'M SURE THAT IT'S CONFUSING HIM

SHIT!

IT MEANS A BALL HIT BY AN OPPONENT WHO MEANS TO WIN

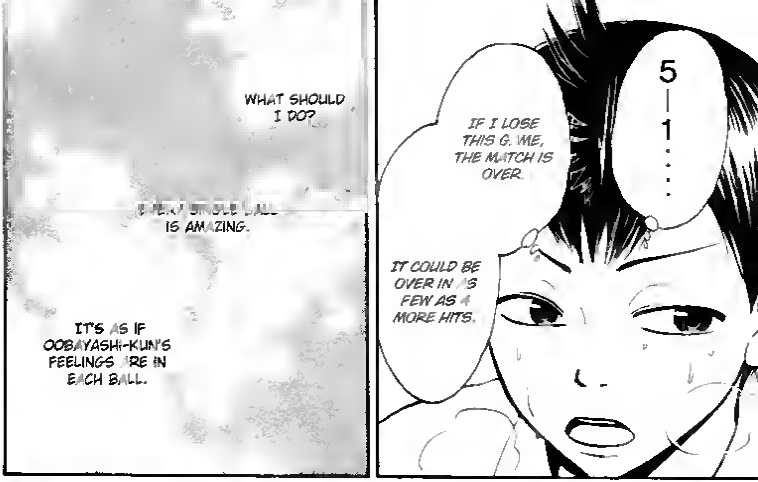
I WANT TO DO THE BASIC STROKE, 1) A GOOD STANCE, 2) A SMOOTH SWING, 3) THWAP!! BUT
I CAN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT NOW!
THE BALL IS BOUNCING, BUT SOMETIMES IT'S NOT BOUNCING, SOMETIMES GOING IN THE OTHER DIRECTION, AND
I CAN'T DO THINGS LIKE I DO WHEN I'M PRACTICING!!


HE CHASES THE BALL SO WELL

SHIT!
0 — 15

IS THIS REAL TENNIS?
THIS IS REAL COMPETITION?

E-CHAN
...
カン
ニャン
GAME!
OOBAYASHI LEADS, 5-1
ざ
ざ


WHAT SHOULD I DO?
EVERY SINGLE BALL IS AMAZING.
IT'S AS IF OOBAYASHI-KUN'S FEELINGS ARE IN EACH BALL.
5—1……
IF I LOSE THIS GAME, THE MATCH IS OVER.
IT COULD BE OVER IN AS FEW AS 4 MORE HITS.

……
pant
pant
BUT EVEN WHEN I CAN RETURN THE BALL ..

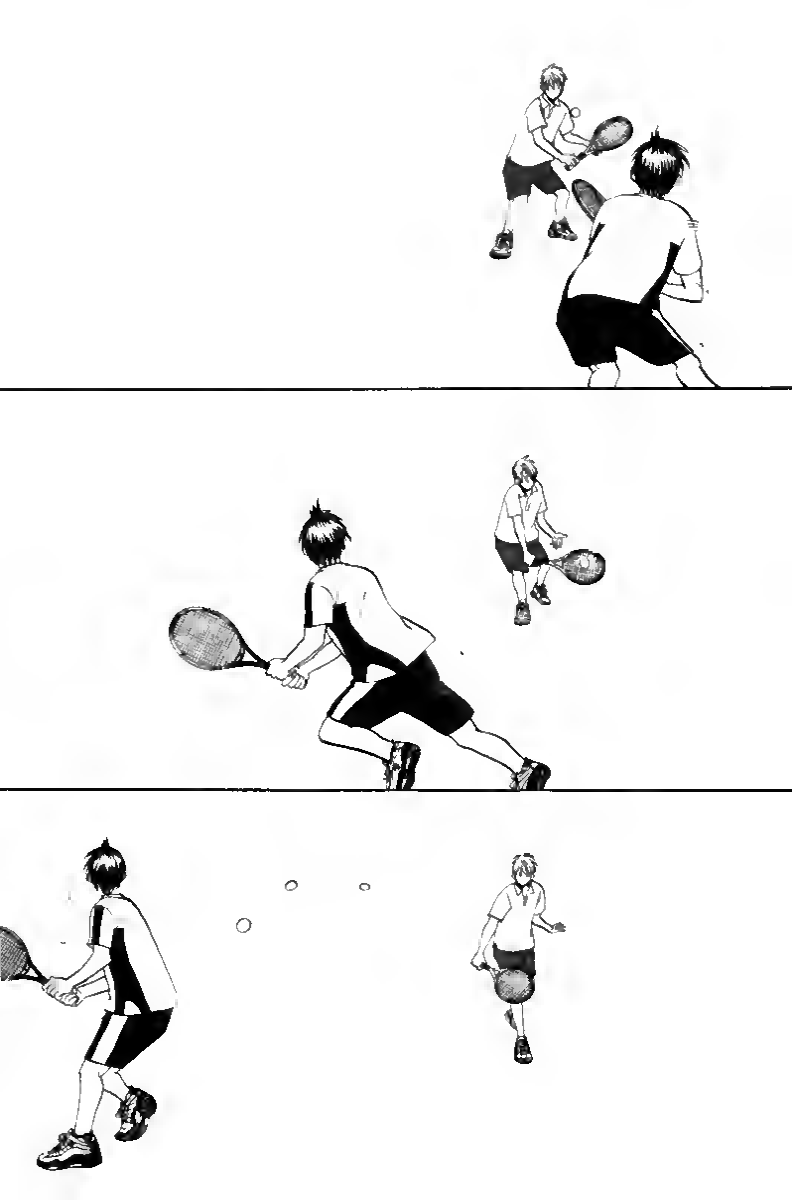
I WANT TO PLAY MORE.

* RULE IS 20 SECOND TIME LIMIT, IF YOU EXCEED IT, YOU LOSE A POINT

EVEN IF IT'S JUST ONE BALL, I'M GOING TO CONCENTRATE ON RETURNING IT!!
I'M GOING TO FORGET ABOUT MY BASIC STROKE,
SINCE I CAN'T POSSIBLY USE IT DURING THIS PLAY.
I'LL JUST PUT EVERYTHING INTO THE RACQUET
AND I'LL AIM FOR THE AREA WHERE IT SEEMS LEAST LIKELY THAT I'LL MISS THE BALL!!
GAH!
AND NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TO WATCH WHERE THE BALL COMES TO!!

I'LL FOCUS ALL OF MY SENSES ON OOBAYASHI'S MOVEMENTS AND THE TRAJECTORY OF THE BALL,
AND MAKE SURE I DON'T MISS EVEN THE SMALLEST MOVEMENT.
I'LL CHANGE MY VIEWPOINT COMPLETELY.

AND BY DOING SO,
CROSS



ハーハー
!?
ATTEMPT TO GREATLY CHANGE THE TIDE OF THIS MATCH.
!?

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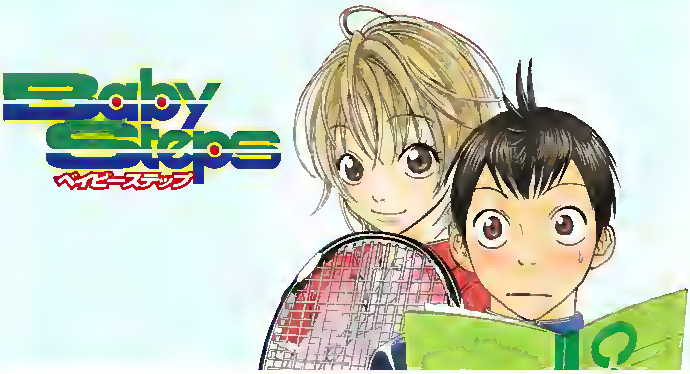

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Baby Steps
ベイビーステップ
!?
ｱｯ
YOU FINALLY GOT A POINT!!
YOU DID IT, E-CHAN!
0—15
pant
pant

11 MORE THAN EXPECTED

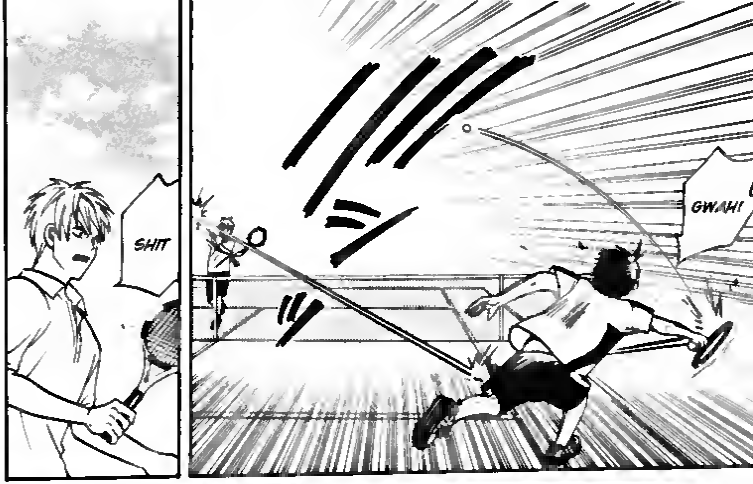
I'M SURVIVING, BUT
5 1
IT DOESN'T CHANGE THAT FACT THAT IT ONLY TAKES 4 MORE POINTS TO LOSE
IF NOTHING ELSE, I'LL RETURN AT LEAST ONE BALL!!
I'LL WATCH HIS MOVEMENTS AND THE TRAJECTORY OF THE BALL, AND
RETURN THE BALL TO THE MIDDLE.
I'LL CONCENTRATE EVERYTHING ON MY EYES!!
IF I DO THIS, NOT EVEN 1 BALL CAN ESCAPE ME!!

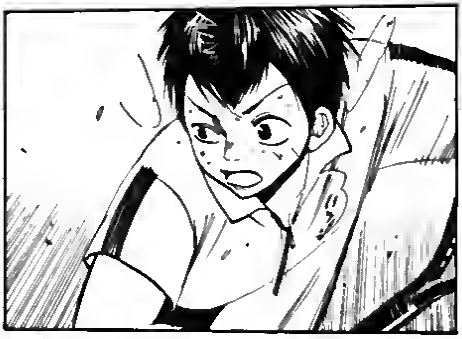
GAH!
WILL HE SPRING?
WILL HE SLIDE?
FRONT?
BACK?
LEFT?
RIGHT?
RIGHT!!

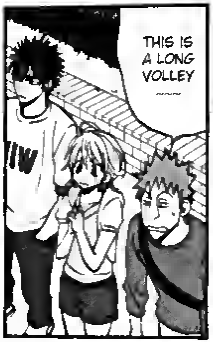
HE'S DOING IT AGAIN..!!
OUT!
THIS WILL END IT!
GWAH!
SHIT. I WAS TOO IMPATIENT.
YES!!
0 - 30 !

TAKUMA!
GAH!
DOH!

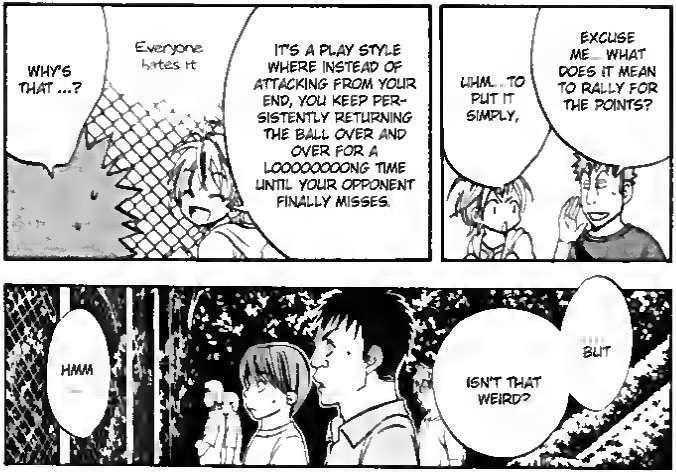
DAH!
YES! HE MOVED FOR-WARD!
END IT NOW!!
!!


SHIT
GWAH!




THIS IS A LONG VOLLEY

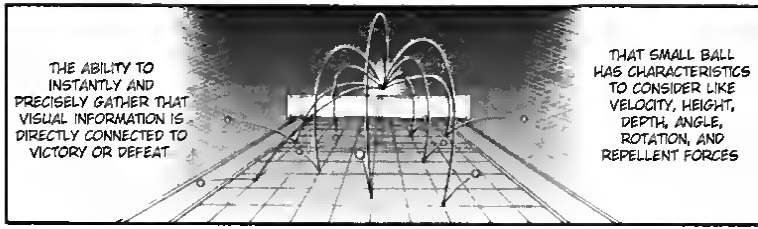
THAT'S A LAST RESORT ISN'T IT?
IT WON'T MEAN MUCH TO START DOING IT NOW.
He's already weakened
HE'S STARTED TO BE FORCEFUL AND TENACIOUS
DO YOU THINK HE'S GOING TO RALLY FOR THE POINTS?

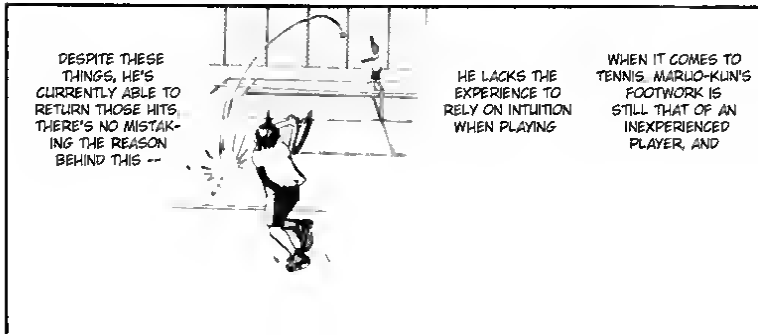

EXCUSE ME... WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO RALLY FOR THE POINTS?
UHM... TO PUT IT SIMPLY,
IT'S A PLAY STYLE WHERE INSTEAD OF ATTACKING FROM YOUR END, YOU KEEP PERSISTENTLY RETURNING THE BALL OVER AND OVER FOR A LOOOOOOOONG TIME UNTIL YOUR OPPONENT FINALLY MISSES.
Everyone hates it
WHY'S THAT ...?
BUT
ISN'T THAT WEIRD?
HMM

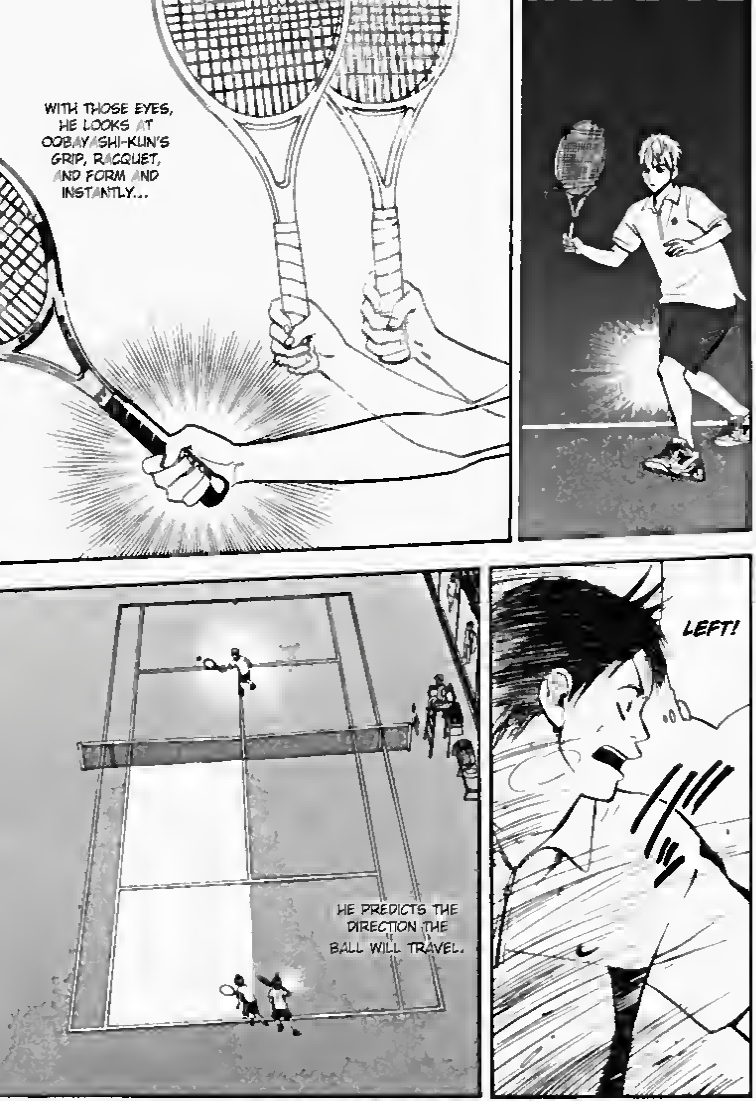
THE RALLY SHOULD BE OOBAYASHI'S SPECIALTY IT JUST CONSISTS OF SERVES AND VOLLEYS, RIGHT?
AND YET, WHY DOES OOBAYASHI
LOOK LIKE HE'S REALLY STRUGGLING?
!

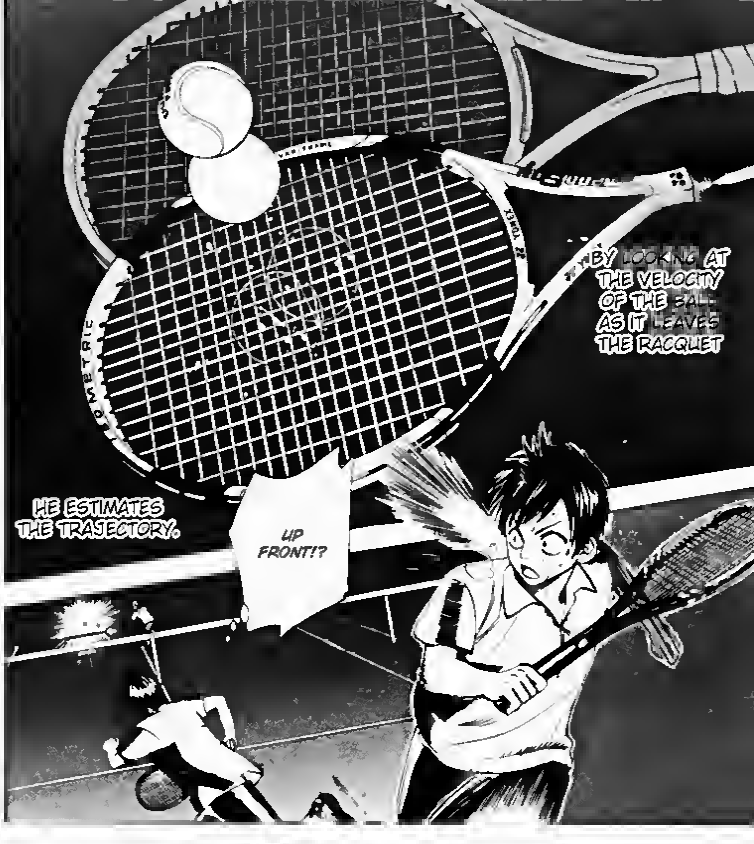
HE'S RUNNING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE BALL BEFORE I EVEN HIT IT!!
THERE'S NO MISTAKING IT

THEY SAY THAT TENNIS IS A SPORT IN WHICH STRONG VISUAL ABILITIES ARE PARTICULARLY NEEDED.


THE ABILITY TO INSTANTLY AND PRECISELY GATHER THAT VISUAL INFORMATION IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO VICTORY OR DEFEAT
THAT SMALL BALL HAS CHARACTERISTICS TO CONSIDER LIKE VELOCITY, HEIGHT, DEPTH, ANGLE, ROTATION, AND REPELLENT FORCES


DESPITE THESE THINGS, HE'S CURRENTLY ABLE TO RETURN THOSE HITS. THERE'S NO MISTAKING THE REASON BEHIND THIS --
HE LACKS THE EXPERIENCE TO RELY ON INTUITION WHEN PLAYING
WHEN IT COMES TO TENNIS, MARUO-KUN'S FOOTWORK IS STILL THAT OF AN INEXPERIENCED PLAYER, AND


WITH THOSE EYES, HE LOOKS AT OOBAYASHI-KUN'S GRIP, RACQUET, AND FORM AND INSTANTLY...
HE PREDICTS THE DIRECTION THE BALL WILL TRAVEL.
LEFT!

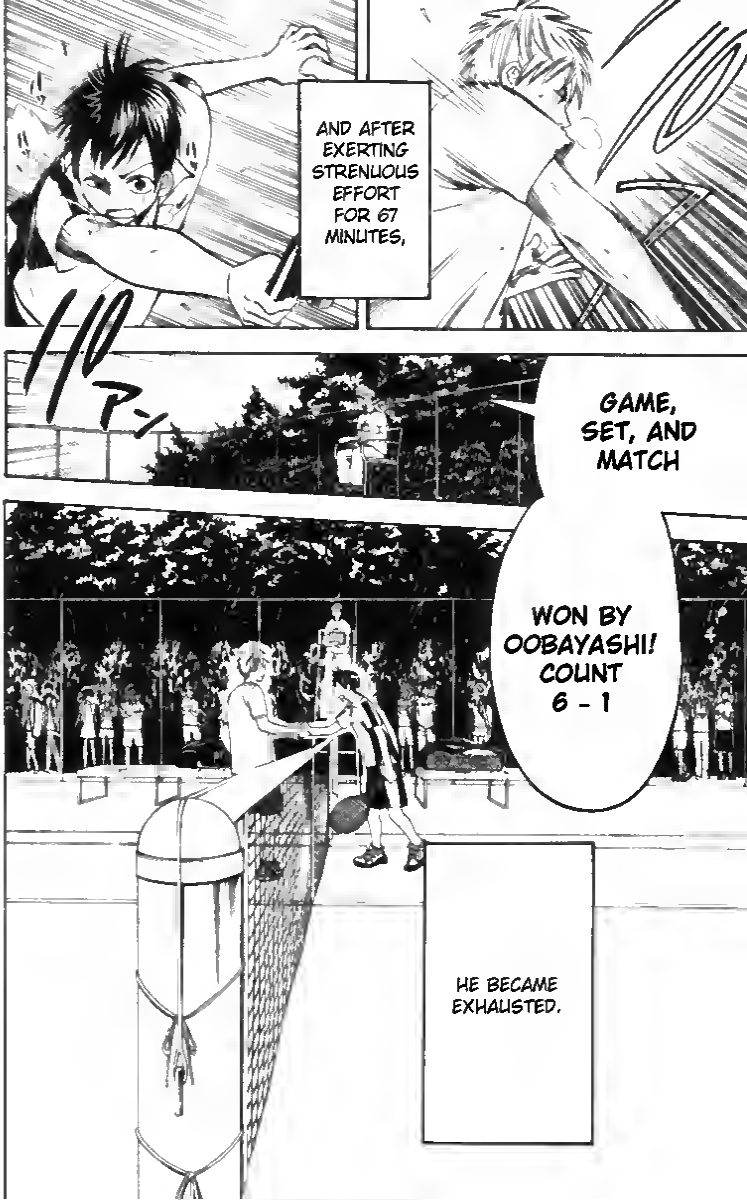

BY LOOKING AT THE VELOCITY OF THE BALL AS IT LEAVES THE RACQUET
HE ESTIMATES THE TRAJECTORY.
UP FRONT!?

HE USES THE INFORMATION HE GATHERS FROM HIS EYESIGHT TO QUICKLY RUN THE SHORTEST DISTANCE TO THE BALL'S DESTINATION.
WILL I REACH IT?
DUN

WOAH!!
O..OH MY GOD!! HE GOT IT!!
IT'S IN!! IT'S GOING IN!!
ARE YOU SERIOUS!?
TH..THIS IS MORE THAN I EXPECTED!!

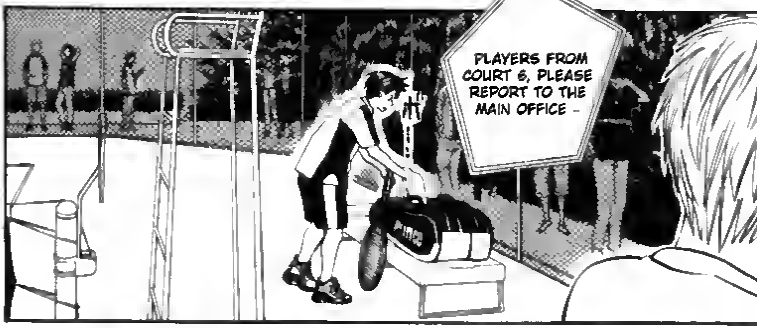
ゲシッ
SO THEN WHERE THE HELL SHOULD I...
!?
GYAH!!
AIM FOR!?
ドゴッ

NO!! RIGHT IN THE FACE!!
WAS HE AIMING FOR IT ON PURPOSE!?
I...I'M SORRY
OH, I I'M FINE...
B...BUT HE KEEPS GETTING THE BALL NO MATTER WHAT. IT MAKES YOU WANT TO HIT HIM
YEAH, I PROBABLY WOULD WANT TO
LOOKS PAINFUL
AS IT TURNS OUT,
WHILE JUST COVERING THE COURT
EIICHIROU HAD FINALLY REACHED HIS LIMIT ABOUT THAT TIME--


AND AFTER EXERTING STRENUOUS EFFORT FOR 67 MINUTES,
ハァハァ
GAME, SET, AND MATCH
WON BY OOBAYASHI! COUNT 6 - 1
HE BECAME EXHAUSTED.

IT'S OVER....
WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY?
I can't decide if he's amazing or weird.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
I THINK IT'S OK TO LET GO
UHM... MY HAND
OH

MAN, WHAT INCREDIBLE PERSEVER-ANCE!
I'M KIND OF IN AWE OF IT
.....

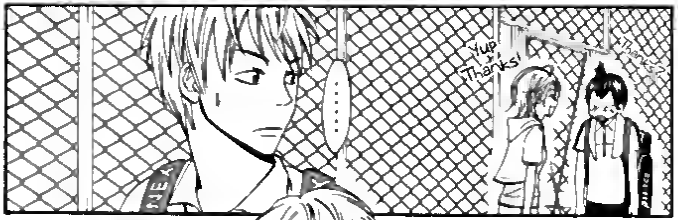

PLAYERS FROM COURT 6, PLEASE REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE -

THAT BOY IS INTRIGUING ....!!

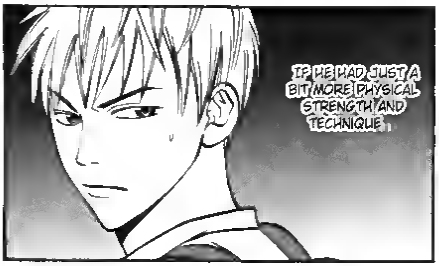
GAME SET WON BY OOBAYASHI, COUNT 6 – 1
WOBBLE
IT'S OVER...
PLAYERS FROM COURT 6, PLEASE REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE –
#12: JUST A LITTLE BIT

ドン
GOOD JOB, E-CHAN!!
ARE... ARE YOU OK? I DIDN'T PUSH YOU VERY HARD
MY LEGS NO STRENGTH
YOU WERE AWESOME!! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT WAS YOUR FIRST MATCH..
HUH?
I...I COULDN'T DO IT....
DON'T SAY THAT!
I LOST
sflush
YOU WERE SO COOL!!

THANKS.
HUH?
I'LL DO MY BEST, TOO.

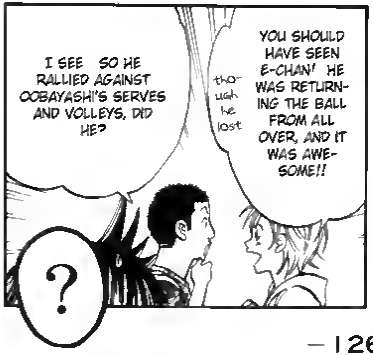

.....
YUP. THANKS!

OOBAYASHI! GOOD JOB!
SO IT REALLY WAS HIS FIRST TIME


IF HE HAD JUST A BIT MORE PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND TECHNIQUE...

IT TOOK OVER AN HOUR. YOU HAD A HARDER TIME THAN USUAL FOR A 6-1 WIN.
YEAH.

SHIT.
I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT.
prince

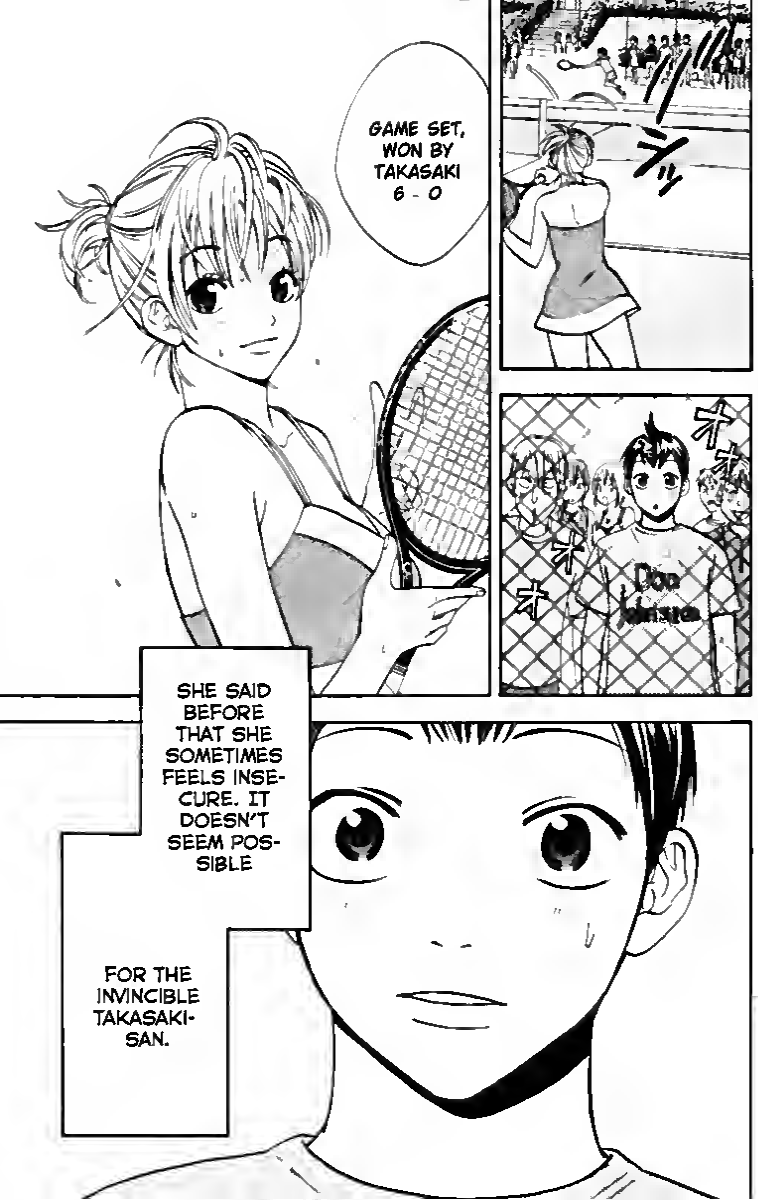

I SEE. SO HE RALLIED AGAINST OOBAYASHI'S SERVES AND VOLLEYS, DID HE?
tho-ugh he lost
YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN E-CHAN! HE WAS RETURNING THE BALL FROM ALL OVER, AND IT WAS AWESOME!!
?

THAT WAS A LONG MATCH, WASN'T IT?
I JUST FINISHED UP AND CHANGED A MINUTE AGO MYSELF.
WOAH! ANIKI, DID YOU JUST FINISH!?

WHISPER
WHISPER
TO "RALLY" MEANS..
NATSU EXPLAINED IT TO ME
RALLY?
SFX HA HA HA HA
N...NO, NO, NO, NO! DON'T SAY THAT!!
WHAT IN THE WORLD DID HE TELL E-CHAN?
YOU'RE WRONG!!
HM... HOW AM I GOING TO POLISH
THAT RAW GEM.
E-CHAN. WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
A GIRL SHOULDN'T BE SAYING THOSE THINGS!!
HUH? He lied?

WE WILL NOW BE MOVING INTO THE 2ND ROTATION
THE FIRST DAY OF THE KANAZAWA JUNIOR TENNIS CIRCUIT HAS 2 ROTATIONS
AMAZ-ING
Don
HE MAJORITY OF THE SEEDED PLAYERS PLAY IN THE 2ND ROTA-TION, SO THAT'S WHEN MOST OF THE STC PLAYERS COMPETE. THEY ARE
TRULY STRONG.

AS FOR TAKASAKI SAN,
THAT'S STC'S TAKASAKI NATSU?
I CAN'T SEE...
LOOK AT THIS CROWD
I'M UP NEXT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
SHE'S SO CUTE!
AND THEY SAY SHE'S STRONG, TOO!


GAME SET, WON BY TAKASAKI 6 - 0
SHE SAID BEFORE THAT SHE SOMETIMES FEELS INSECURE. IT DOESN'T SEEM POSSIBLE
FOR THE INVINCIBLE TAKASAKI-SAN.

TODAY'S COMPETITION HAS ENDED
PLEASE REPORT TO THE OFFICE FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT TOMORROW...
OK, EVERYONE BYE!
E-CHAN, REST UP TODAY, OK?
I'M HOME.
OH, WELCOME BACK, EIICHIROU! HOW WAS THE MATCH?
I LOST
OH... THAT'S TOO BAD...

ドサ
prince
THANKS
CHEER UP I'M MAKING YOUR FAVORITE FOOD, BOILED SQUASH
I'M TIRED
ガラ
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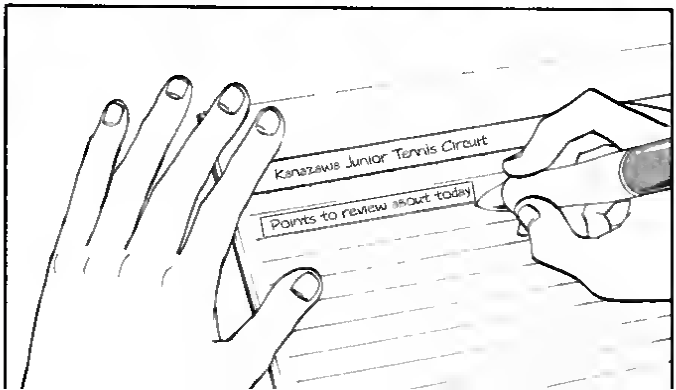
ガタン
ガタン
OH.
EICHIROU!
IF YOU HAVE ANY DIRTY CLOTHES, PLEASE PUT THEM INTO THE LAUNDRY.
DAD'S GOING TO BE HOME SOON
OH, REALLY?

ACTUALLY, THE COACH SAID THE SAME THING
HUH?
THAT HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL SINCE YOU WERE LITTLE
AS ALWAYS, YOUR EYES ARE REALLY GOOD.
DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE, YOU'D SPEND EVERY DAY SITTING THERE FOR HOURS
WAITING EVERY NIGHT AND WATCHING UNTIL YOUR FATHER CAME HOME.
YOU'D STARE ENDLESSLY AT THE TRAINS,
WITH AN INTENSE EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE.
YOU'RE AN ONLY CHILD, AND I WAS WORKING ALL THE TIME
WE HAD JUST MOVED HERE, AND YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS YET. YOU WAITED IMPATIENTLY EVERY NIGHT FOR YOUR FATHER, WHO WOULD PLAY WITH YOU WHEN HE GOT HOME.
WHEN EVENING CAME, YOU SPENT ALL YOUR TIME AT THAT WINDOW.

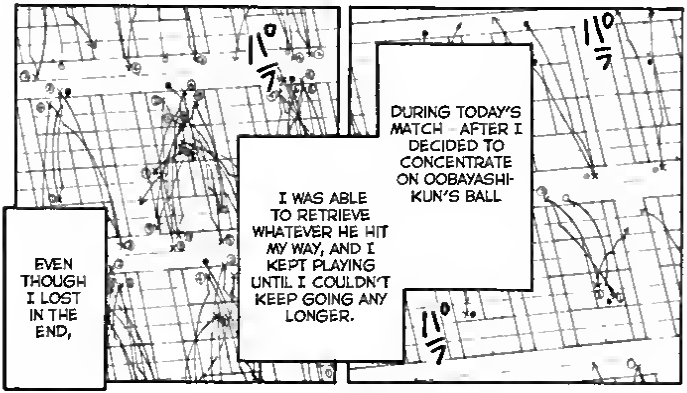
I'M GOING TO GO GET DINNER READY, SO WAIT JUST A LITTLE BIT, OK?
OK!

...

prince

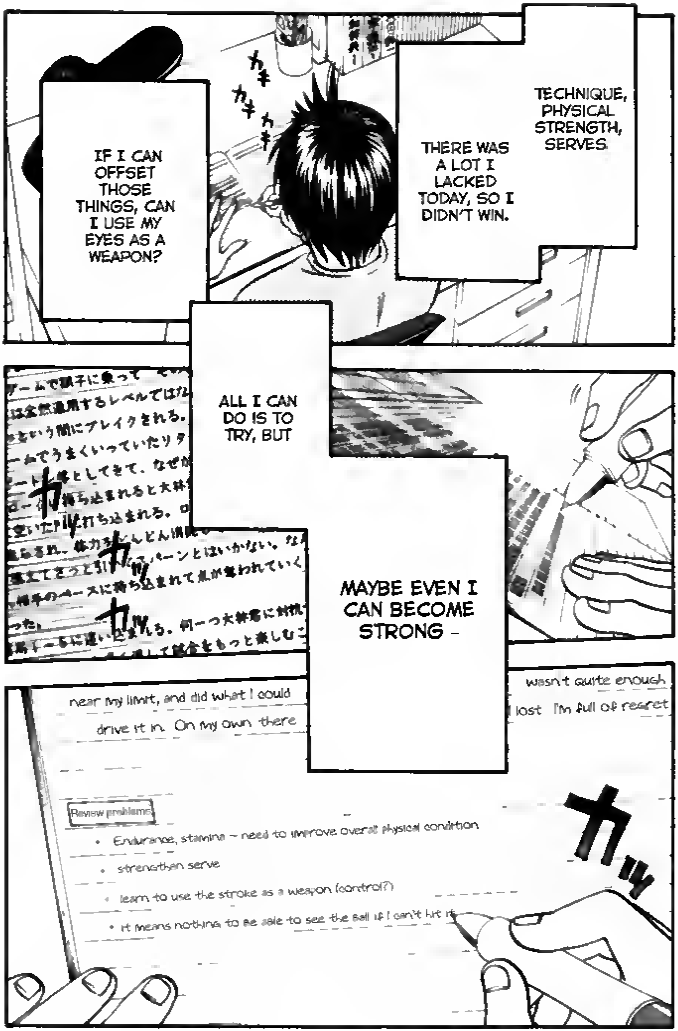

Kanazawa Junior Tennis Circuit
Points to review about today

I WAS TOLD AGAIN THAT MY EYESIGHT WAS GOOD.

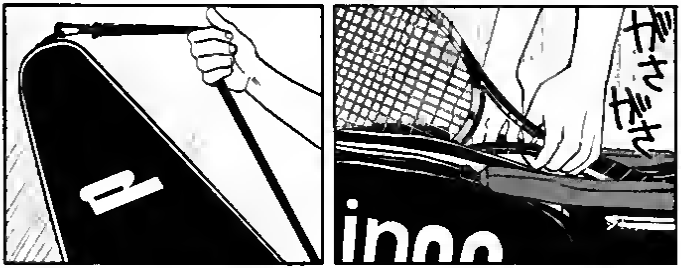

EVEN THOUGH I LOST IN THE END,
I WAS ABLE TO RETRIEVE WHATEVER HE HIT MY WAY, AND I KEPT PLAYING UNTIL I COULDN'T KEEP GOING ANY LONGER.
DURING TODAY'S MATCH AFTER I DECIDED TO CONCENTRATE ON OOBAYASHI-KUN'S BALL

I HAVE A FEELING THAT GOOD EYESIGHT IS A PRETTY BIG ADVANTAGE IN TENNIS.
MAYBE MY EYESIGHT REALLY IS GOOD.

.....
TALENT?
NO, NO, NO.
I'VE NEVER HAD ANY GREAT TALENT IN THE PAST.
.....
BUT ...
I FINALLY COULD SEE IT, SO I WANT TO DO EVEN MORE.
THIS TIME IT TOOK EVERYTHING JUST TO RETURN THE BALL, BUT --
IF I COULD RETURN IT WHERE THE OPPONENT WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING IT, OR
MAYBE HIT A CROSS HERE,
OR A STRAIGHT,
OR WHEN THEY MOVED FORWARD LOB THE BALL...


IF I CAN OFFSET THOSE THINGS, CAN I USE MY EYES AS A WEAPON?
カキ カキ カキ
THERE WAS A LOT I LACKED TODAY, SO I DIDN'T WIN.
TECHNIQUE, PHYSICAL STRENGTH, SERVES
ALL I CAN DO IS TO TRY, BUT
MAYBE EVEN I CAN BECOME STRONG -
near my limit, and did what I could
drive it in. On my own there
wasn't quite enough
I lost I'm full of regret
Review problems
• Endurance, stamina ~ need to improve overall physical condition
• strengthen serve
• learn to use the stroke as a weapon (control?)
• it means nothing to be able to see the ball if I can't hit it
カリ

カポッ


ガさガさ

MOM,
I'M GOING OUT FOR JUST A LITTLE BIT
ぽたぽた
WHAT?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING AT THIS HOUR? WHAT ABOUT DINNER?
prince
Don Johnson

AREN'T YOU GETTING TOO INVOLVED IN THIS...?
HOLD ON. YOU PLAYED ALL DAY TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU HAVE YOUR RACQUET. YOU'RE NOT PLAYING TENNIS AGAIN, ARE YOU?
YES! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
JUST A LITTLE BIT!
EICHIROU...
ハァ

RAW PROVIDER:
RAW-MANGA@KYUUSHI

TRANSLATOR:
GACHIMAYA

PROOFREADER:
WORLDCON

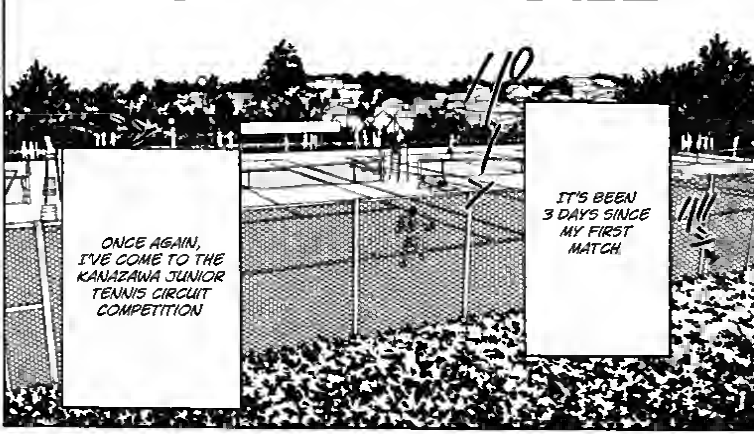
CLEANER:
ROBO-X, ADYTUSS, & ARCHKNIGHT

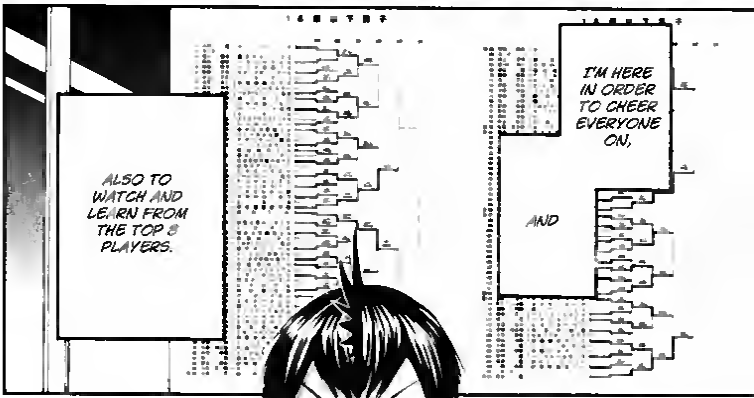
TYPESETTER:
ARCHKNIGHT

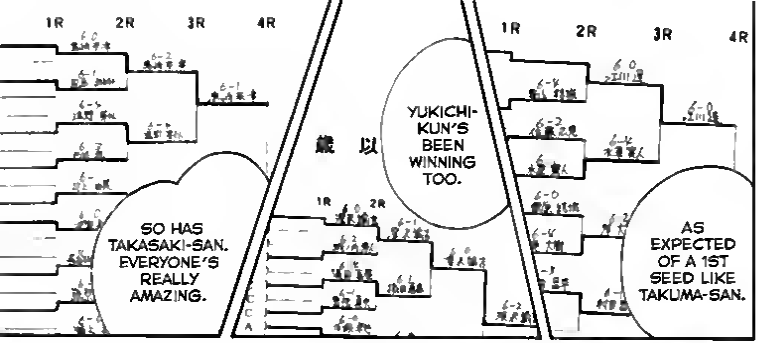
Q-CENS:
GACHIMAYA & HAJII

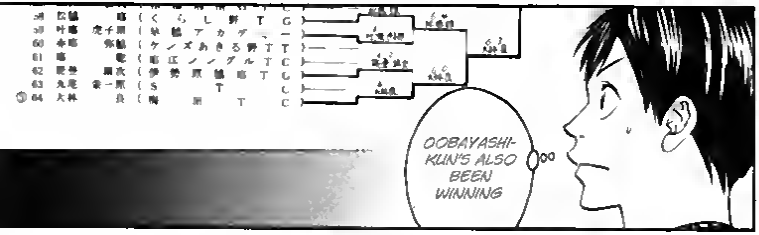
OK! TODAY'S HOMEWORK IS DONE.
AND RIGHT ON TIME!
8:00
I'M LEAVING NOW!!
テスト5

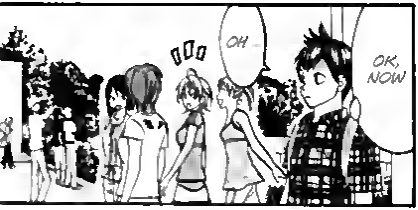
13 THE WAY


ONCE AGAIN, I'VE COME TO THE KANAZAWA JUNIOR TENNIS CIRCUIT COMPETITION
IT'S BEEN 3 DAYS SINCE MY FIRST MATCH.

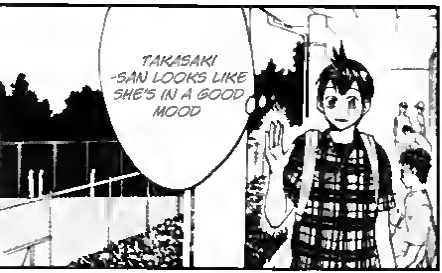

I'M HERE IN ORDER TO CHEER EVERYONE ON,
AND
ALSO TO WATCH AND LEARN FROM THE TOP 8 PLAYERS.


1R
2R
3R
4R
SO HAS TAKASAKI-SAN. EVERYONE'S REALLY AMAZING.
YUKICHI-KUN'S BEEN WINNING TOO.
AS EXPECTED OF A 1ST SEED LIKE TAKUMA-SAN.


OOBAYASHI-KUN'S ALSO BEEN WINNING


OH
OOO
OK, NOW

I'VE COME TO DO SOME RESEARCH!!


TAKASAKI-SAN LOOKS LIKE SHE'S IN A GOOD MOOD

SEE YOU LATER!

WELL, I AM A 6TH SEED AFTER ALL.
YOU'RE HOLDING A BALL, WHICH MEANS THAT YOU WON! CONGRATULATIONS!!

ANIKI! YOU'RE HERE!
OH, YUKICHI-KUN.

IF THINGS GO AS EXPECTED I'LL GO UP AGAINST THE 4TH SEED, BUT. ...OH,
THE PROBLEM IS THE NEXT OPPONENT, THOUGH

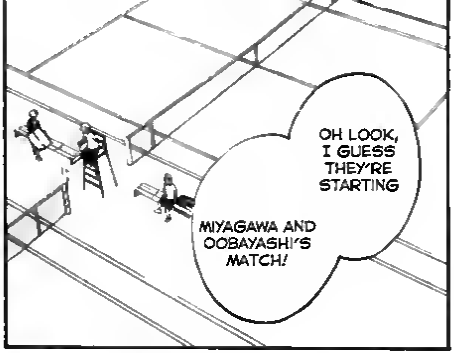
THERE HE IS.
THE ONE WITH THE GLASSES
IS 4TH SEED IWASA HIROMI.
OH, AS ALWAYS, YOU'RE TAKING NOTES. LET ME HELP YOU OUT.
HE'S READING A BOOK RIGHT BEFORE HIS MATCH. MAYBE IT HELPS HIM CONCENTRATE?
NEXT TIME MAYBE I'LL TRY IT.

OH, YUKICHI-KUN! DID YOU WIN?
HEY, MIYAGAWA
HE'S IN 2ND GRADE AT SEIKEI HIGH SCHOOL. ALTHOUGH HE'S KIND OF SHORT AND LACKS POWER, HE PLAYS USING HIS HEAD INSTEAD. HE CLEVERLY HITS HIS SHOTS ALL AROUND, AND IN PARTICULAR HITS LOBS, DROPS, AND OTHER SHOTS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO RETURN. HIS ACCURACY IS INCREDIBLE, BUT HE'S KIND OF A STRANGE PERSON. HIS PARENTS ARE ARTISTS, HE LIKES TO READ BOOKS, AND AS YOU CAN TELL, HE'S A QUIET PERSON.
RED EYEZ: TOO MUCH INFO >.<
OH .. REALLY?
TO BE HONEST, IT'S VERY HARD TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S THINKING, SO HE'S HARD TO PLAY AGAINST.
HE'S GOING UP AGAINST OOBAYASHI-KUN
Ha Ha
I'VE GOT OOBAYASHI-KUN NEXT, SO I HAVE TO DO MY BEST.
!
OUR BLOCK IS MOVING REALLY QUICKLY, AND WE'RE ALREADY DOWN TO BEST 4.
SOMEHOW I MANAGED. HOW ABOUT YOU?
HE'S SO TALL AND THIN.

WH WHAT WERE THEY SAYING!?
YOU GUYS HAD AN AMAZING RALLY. EVERYONE WAS TALKING ABOUT IT AFTER-WARDS.
Y yes.
YOU PLAYED AGAINST OOBAYASHI IN THE FIRST ROUND?
OH... YOU'RE MARUO-KUN, RIGHT?
SEE YOU LATER!
I'LL GET RE-VENGE FOR YOU, SO
REVENGE ..?
YAMIGAWA TAKUYA IS 3RD SEED THIS TIME.
ANIKI, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE TO KEEP HIM IN MIND.
SEE THE ONE WAY OVER THERE ON COURT 2?
THAT'S THE 2ND SEED PLAYER.
LOOK OVER THERE.
WHITE
WHITE

OH, THE BALL WENT TO A GOOD SPOT.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS EASY FOR A SPRINTER LIKE HIM.
BUT YOU'RE UNDERES-TIMATING HIM.
ON TOP OF THAT, EVEN WHEN HE'S TIRED, HE'S TOUGH ENOUGH TO MAKE A FULL SHOT NO MATTER WHAT!!
HA!
HE'S A DREADED DEFENSIVE BASELINER, ALSO KNOWN AS A COUNTER-PUNCHER.

WOW ....
BOOYAH!!!
ARAYA HIROSHI
TO BE HONEST, THAT GUY'S A WILD ANIMAL
BY THE WAY, HE'S A 1ST GRADER IN HIGH SCHOOL
HE DOESN'T LOOK IT!!!
SAME AGE AS ME!?
AND... HE'S A MUSCLE-TRAINING MANIAC.


OH LOOK, I GUESS THEY'RE STARTING
MIYAGAWA AND OOBAYASHI'S MATCH!

1 set match
Oobayashi Serves. Play!

GWAH!
WHAT AMAZING ENERGY...!
HE'S A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON NOW, RIGHT?
MIYAGAWA AND ARAYA ARE BOTH BASELINERS, BUT THEY DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER A BIT.
HIS BALLS CAN BOUNCE OR SKID, OR CHANGE DIRECTIONS. PLUS HE CAN HIT A FULL SHOT BOTH FOREHAND AND BACKHAND.
THEY CALL HIS HARD SHOT THE "SEVEN-COLORED STROKE" BECAUSE HIS RETURNS - LIKE THE COLORS OF A RAINBOW - CAN VARY GREATLY.

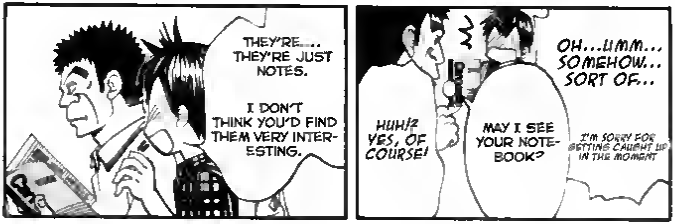
O... OOBAYASHI-KUN IS...
EVEN OOBAYASHI, WHOSE SPECIALTY IS THE RALLY, CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP HIS FEET STILL IN THIS GAME.
SO THAT'S ABOUT IT FOR THE KANAGAWA MAJOR PLAYERS.
DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE OOBAYASHI AND ME TOO.
ON TOP OF THAT, HE'S ONLY IN 3RD GRADE OF JUNIOR HIGH.
HEY, ARE YOU LISTENING?
THE REAL COMPETITION IS ON COURT 1.
ANYWAY, I CAN TALK ALL I WANT, BUT

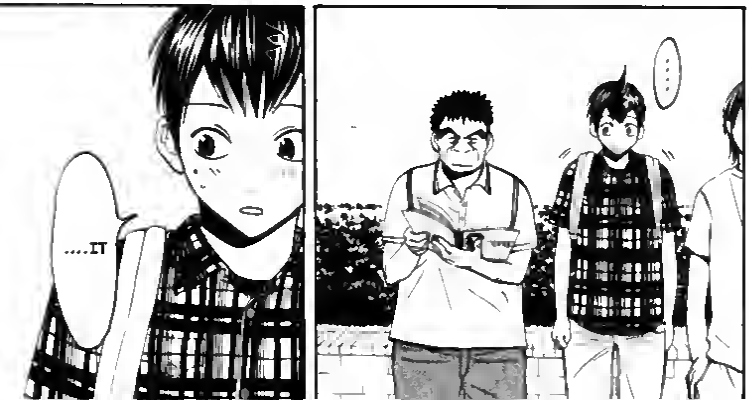
OBSERVE. IT'S STC'S VERY OWN
EGAWA TAKUMA-SAN.
TAKUMA-SAN'S BEEN PLAYING NATIONALLY SINCE CHILD-HOOD, SO HE'S WELL-KNOWN AT KANAGAWA.
TO BE HONEST, HE'S ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM US.
!
LATELY THOUGH, THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THAT HE DOESN'T EVEN WANT TO PLAY ANYMORE, AND
THEY'RE WONDERING WHAT HE'LL DO ABOUT THE NEXT COMPETITION WITH ALL THE TOP PLAYERS IN THE REGION...

CHE
WATCHING HIM PLAYING TODAY,
IT ALMOST SEEMS LIKE HE'S RETURNED TO THE OLD TAKUMA-SAN.
OOPS I HAVE TO RETURN THE BALL NOW.
I'LL SEE YOU LATER, ANIKI!
OK. CONGRAT-ULATIONS!
WILL THE WINNER OF THE MATCH AT COURT 4 PLEASE RETURN THE BALL TO THE MAIN OFFICE

HA

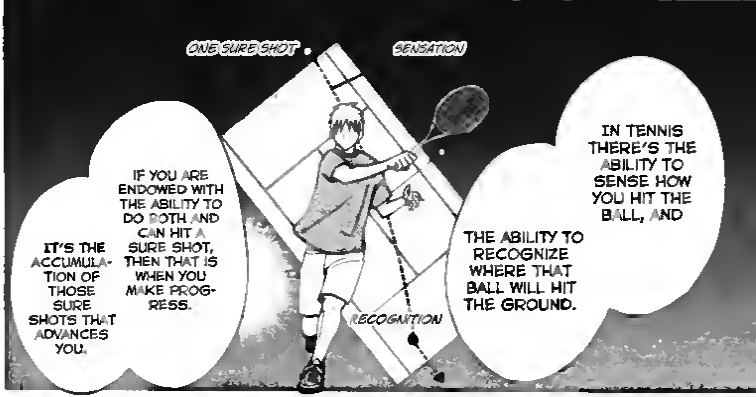
DO YOU WANT TO WIN?
WHAT?
Coach?
YOU HAD THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE.

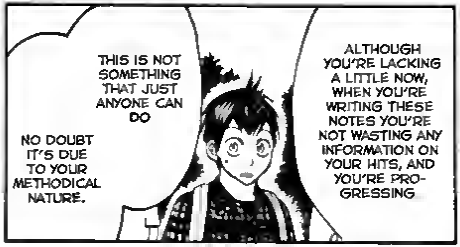

THEY'RE..... THEY'RE JUST NOTES.
I DON'T THINK YOU'D FIND THEM VERY INTERESTING.
HUH?! YES, OF COURSE!
MAY I SEE YOUR NOTEBOOK?
OH...UMM... SOMEHOW... SORT OF...
I'M SORRY FOR GETTING CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT

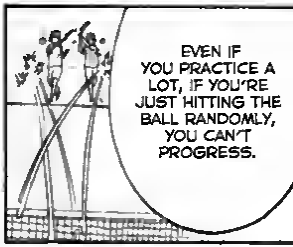

.....IT

IT WAS A LOT OF FUN.
I LOST ...
AND I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, SO
I FELT FRUSTRATED, BUT
I WAS TOLD THAT MY EYESIGHT WAS GOOD, AND
I WAS ABLE TO TELL IT WAS TRUE DURING THE MATCH.
ONCE I REALIZED THAT, I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE I COULD BECOME STRONGER...
IF I CAN, THEN I THINK IT WILL BECOME EVEN MORE FUN...

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS TO IT.
YOUR EYES ARE DEFINITELY VERY GOOD.
テニス 5
HOWEVER, LOOKING AT YOUR NOTES, I SEE GREAT COMPREHENSION.
テニス
YOU DON'T BECOME GOOD AT TENNIS JUST BECAUSE YOUR EYES ARE GOOD THOUGH.
YOU'VE ONLY PLAYED FOR 4 MONTHS, AND TO BE HONEST, I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT YOU'D MAKE A SEEDED PLAYER SUFFER DURING A GAME
THAT DURING YOUR MATCH YOU WERE ABLE TO CLEARLY UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING THAT YOU HIT.
THIS MEANS
IN THIS BOOK, YOU'VE GOT THE MOVEMENT OF EACH AND EVERY BALL IN YOUR MATCH NOTED.


ONE SURE SHOT
SENSATION
IN TENNIS THERE'S THE ABILITY TO SENSE HOW YOU HIT THE BALL, AND
THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE WHERE THAT BALL WILL HIT THE GROUND.
RECOGNITION
IF YOU ARE ENDOWED WITH THE ABILITY TO DO BOTH AND CAN HIT A SURE SHOT, THEN THAT IS WHEN YOU MAKE PROGRESS.
IT'S THE ACCUMULATION OF THOSE SURE SHOTS THAT ADVANCES YOU.


ALTHOUGH YOU'RE LACKING A LITTLE NOW, WHEN YOU'RE WRITING THESE NOTES YOU'RE NOT WASTING ANY INFORMATION ON YOUR HITS, AND YOU'RE PROGRESSING
THIS IS NOT SOMETHING THAT JUST ANYONE CAN DO
NO DOUBT IT'S DUE TO YOUR METHODICAL NATURE.


EVEN IF YOU PRACTICE A LOT, IF YOU'RE JUST HITTING THE BALL RANDOMLY, YOU CAN'T PROGRESS.

IF YOU CONSIDER YOUR OVERALL PROGRESS OVER THESE PAST 4 MONTHS,
WITH THE RIGHT PRACTICE,
IN A YEAR... NO, A HALF-YEAR... NO, EVEN BEFORE THEN,

.....

YOU CAN BECOME STRONGER THAN ALL OF THEM!!
!!!

I'M NOT JOKING WHEN I SAY THAT, THOUGH.
!
MAYBE.
IT'S UP TO YOU NOW.
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO BECOME STRONGER,
COME TO THE STC COURT#1 TOMORROW MORNING AT 7AM.

iMANGA
scanlations

RAW PROVIDER:
RAW-MANGA@KYUUSHI

TRANSLATOR:
GACHIMAYA

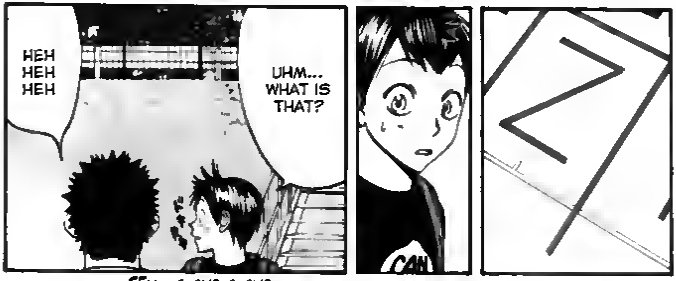
PROOFREADER:
O-SN4KS-O

CLEANER:
ROBO-X & ADYTUSS

TYPESETTER:
RED_EYEZ

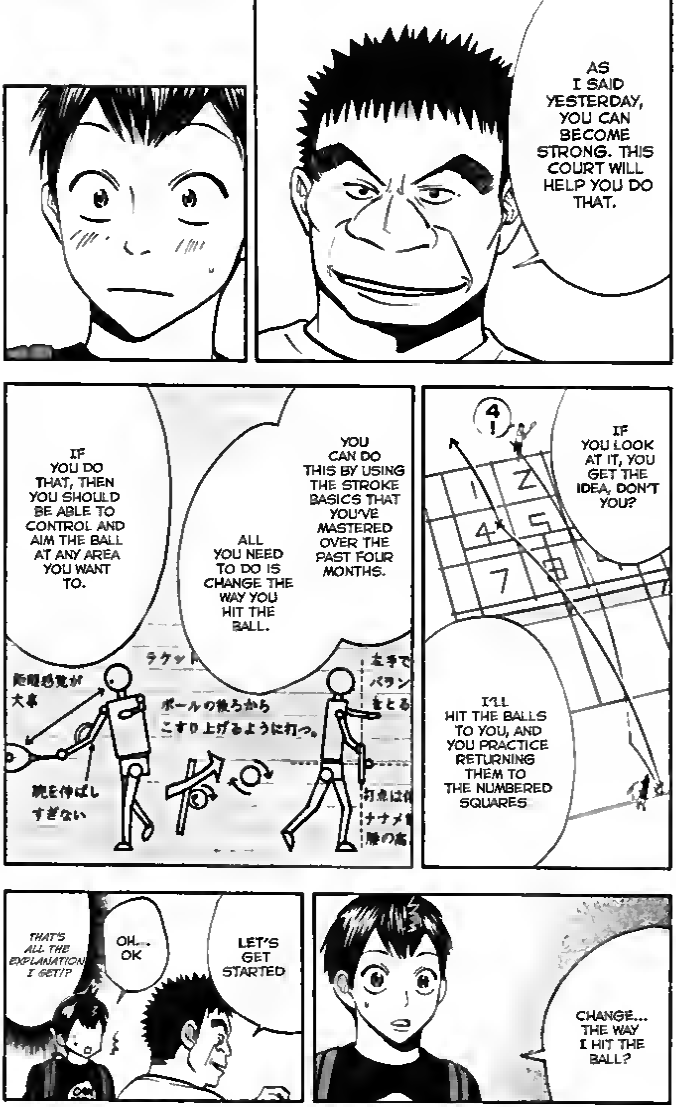
Q-CENS:
GACHIMAYA & KAJII

YOU CAN BECOME STRONGER THAN ALL OF THEM!!
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO BECOME STRONGER, COME TO THE STC COURT#1 TOMORROW MORNING AT 7AM.
7:00 AM STC COURT#1
THE COACH SAID THIS TO ME,
AND OF COURSE IT WAS OBVIOUS WHAT MY ANSWER WOULD BE
BUT... I WONDER WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN!?
GOOD MORNING!!
CAN
VITAMIN C
I'M SO GREEN
Baby Steps



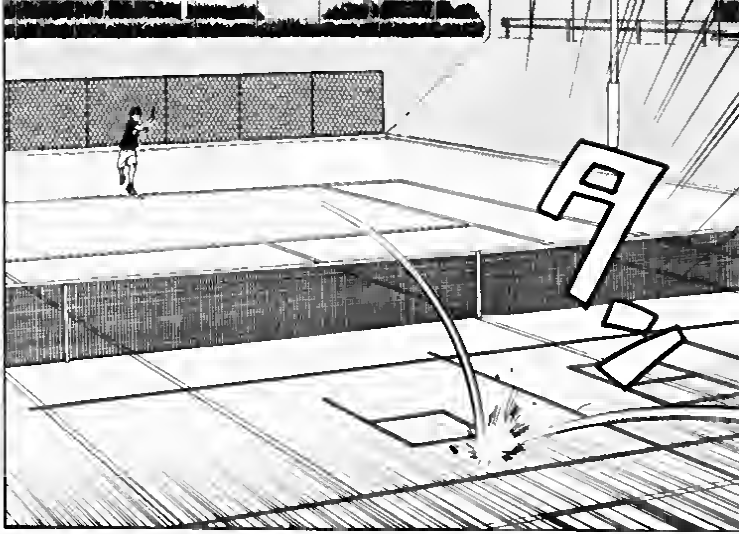
SFx: B-BMP B-BMP

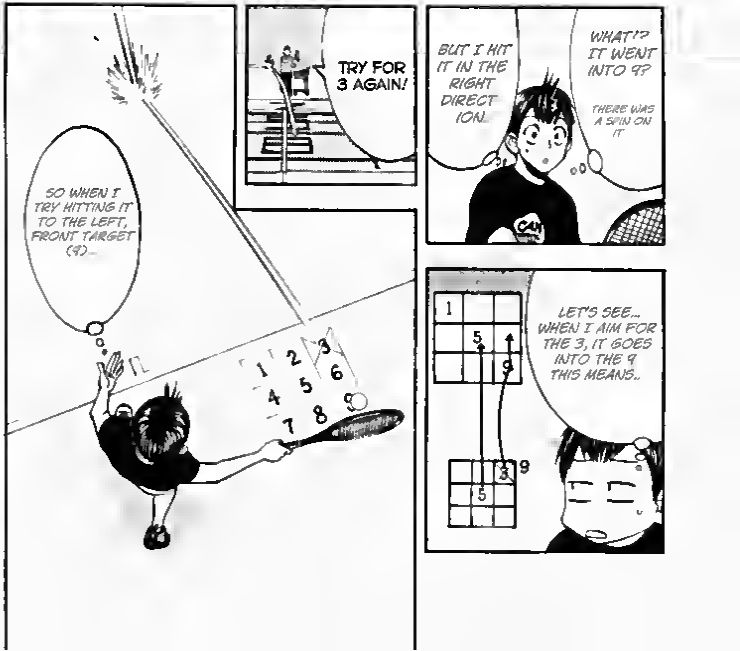
14 TO VICTORY


AS I SAID YESTERDAY, YOU CAN BECOME STRONG. THIS COURT WILL HELP YOU DO THAT.
IF YOU DO THAT, THEN YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONTROL AND AIM THE BALL AT ANY AREA YOU WANT TO.
ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS CHANGE THE WAY YOU HIT THE BALL.
YOU CAN DO THIS BY USING THE STROKE BASICS THAT YOU'VE MASTERED OVER THE PAST FOUR MONTHS.
IF YOU LOOK AT IT, YOU GET THE IDEA, DON'T YOU?
I'LL HIT THE BALLS TO YOU, AND YOU PRACTICE RETURNING THEM TO THE NUMBERED SQUARES
LET'S GET STARTED
OH... OK
THAT'S ALL THE EXPLANATION I GET!?
CHANGE... THE WAY I HIT THE BALL?

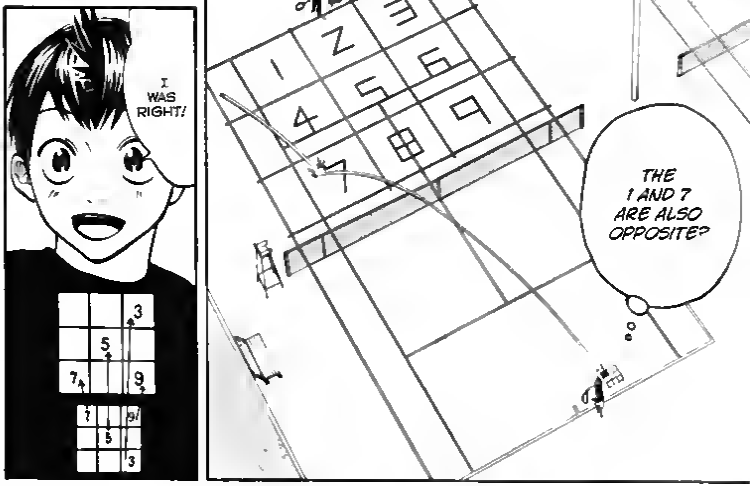
PLEASE TAKE GOOD CARE OF ME!!
LET'S BEGIN WITH THE MIDDLE, WHERE YOU ALWAYS AIM.
TRY TO HIT 5
5
THEN I'LL DO WHAT I ALWAYS DO AND 1) A GOOD STANCE 2) A SMOOTH SWING
GOOD.
AS I THOUGHT, YOU'VE GOT YOUR BASIC STROKE DOWN.
AH

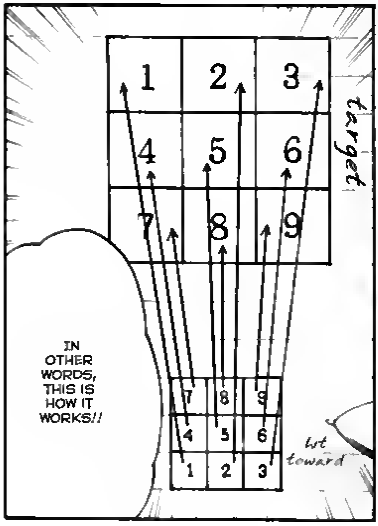
OK, THE WAY I JUST HIT IT SENT THE BALL INTO 5, SO...
HE SAID THAT ALL I HAD TO DO WAS TO CHANGE THE WAY I HIT THE BALL.
3
!
OK, LET'S PRACTICE SOMETHING NEW.
3
HIT IT INTO 3.
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
MAYBE I SHOULD HIT THE BALL TOWARD THE RIGHT BACK AREA, IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS THE TARGET?
5




TRY FOR 3 AGAIN!
BUT I HIT IT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION...
WHAT!? IT WENT INTO 9?
THERE WAS A SPIN ON IT
SO WHEN I TRY HITTING IT TO THE LEFT, FRONT TARGET (4)...
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
LET'S SEE... WHEN I AIM FOR THE 3, IT GOES INTO THE 9. THIS MEANS..
1
5
9
3
9
5

OH
NOT BAD
SO IF I MAKE A SMALL ADJUST-MENT..
TRY FOR 3 AGAIN!
SO CLOSE!
NOW, TRY FOR 7.
GOOD JOB!
THE TARGET FOR 3 AND 9 WERE OPPOSITE SO MAYBE
1 2 9
4 5 6
7 8 3
IT'S IN!!

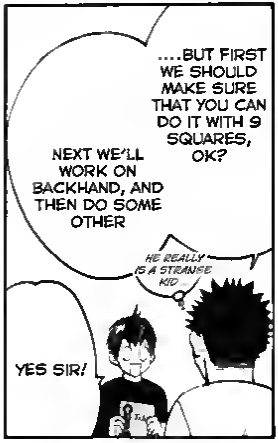


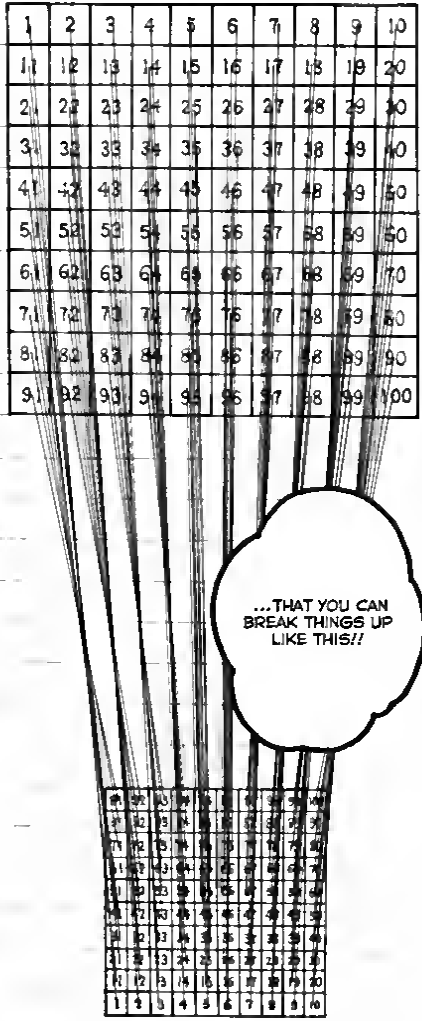

target
IN OTHER WORDS, THIS IS HOW IT WORKS!!
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

RIGHT. THAT'S THE THEORY BEHIND CONTROLLING THE BALL.
YOU'VE MASTERED THE STROKE BY USING THAT REPETITIVE PRACTICING THAT YOU'RE SO GOOD AT.
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE ABLE TO EXERT CONTROL NOW.
I SEE... I'M SO GLAD THAT I SPENT ALL THAT TIME HITTING BALLS AGAINST THE WALL!
AAAHH
THE FOUNDATIONS ARE VERY IMPORTANT...!!
AH!
...THEN THAT MEANS ...
?

A 100 SQUARES

YES... I GUESS THAT'S TRUE.


....BUT FIRST WE SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT YOU CAN DO IT WITH 9 SQUARES, OK?
NEXT WE'LL WORK ON BACKHAND, AND THEN DO SOME OTHER
HE REALLY IS A STRANGE KID
YES SIR!


...THAT YOU CAN BREAK THINGS UP LIKE THIS!!

GOOD!
3!
SHIT SO CLOSE!
NEXT, THE 6!
NOW HIT THE 1 BOX ON THE OTHER SIDE.
GOOD.
IF IT DOESN'T GO WHERE I WANT IT TO, THEN I MAKE SMALL ADJUSTMENTS IF I HIT THE BALL AT THE CORRECT ANGLE, THEN IT WILL HIT THE RIGHT TARGET
I'LL JUST MAKE TINY ADJUST-MENTS..
AND I'LL HIT THE BALL IN PERFECTLY!!

I TOLD YOU THIS BEFORE TOO, BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THE SENSATION WHEN YOU'RE FEELING THE BALL, AND THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE WHERE THAT BALL WILL HIT THE GROUND!!
ARE YOU READY?
GOOD!
IF YOU DO THIS,
THEN HIT BY HIT, YOU'LL IMPROVE.
MAKE YOUR BODY REMEMBER YOUR "SURE SHOTS".
CLEARLY CONNECT "WHERE YOU HIT THE BALL" WITH "WHERE THE BALL WILL HIT THE GROUND" AND

THE ONLY THING LEFT THEN IS TO SEE IF YOU CAN DO IT REPETITIVELY.
10 THOUSAND TIMES
10 MILLION TIMES
100 MILLION TIMES.
MORE AND MORE, THE ACCURACY OF YOUR CONTROL WILL INCREASE!
THAT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT YOU'RE GOOD AT, RIGHT?
8!

YOU HAVE THOSE "EYES"
AND ALL YOU NEED TO DO NOW IS ADD PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
GO AFTER EVERY SINGLE BALL!!
DO THAT, AND USE THAT REPETITIVE PRACTICE THAT SUITS YOU SO WELL TO GRASP THAT CONTROL.
.....!

THE SPORT OF TENNIS IS
ONE IN WHICH IF YOU CAN RETRIEVE EVERY BALL AND CONTROL IT
THEN THEORETICALLY, YOU CANNOT LOSE!!

I GET IT!! THAT'S WHY HE SAID THIS PRACTICE WILL TEACH ME HOW TO WIN!!
THIS BALL I'M HITTING RIGHT NOW
6!
THAT'S RIGHT THAT ONE SURE HIT,
MORE... I WANT TO DO MORE!!
I'VE MADE THE CONNECTION!!
I WANT TO HURRY UP AND COMPETE!!

I WANT TO WIN!
CAN
3
!
GREAT JOB! YOU'RE NOT MISSING AS MUCH!

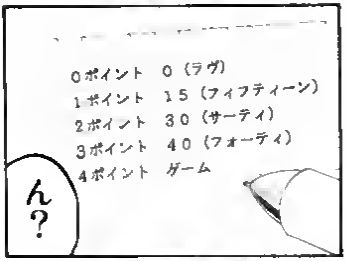
OK.
TAKE A 15
MINUTE
BREAK!

HEY, MARUO-KUN.
WHAT WE JUST DID WAS REALLY A WARM-UP PRACTICE OF THE BASICS.
WHAT?
IT'S ABOUT TIME
THAT YOU GO UP AGAINST
A "LIVE BALL".
HUH...?
OH, HE'S HERE. GOOD TIMING.

CONTINUES IN VOLUME 3

Baby Steps

最初の壁



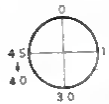
こんにちは　勝木です。

ベイビーステップ2巻を読んでいただき誠に
ありがとうございます。
手紙をくれる方も本当にありがとうございます。
おかげさまで　このして2冊目を出すことが
できました。幸せだー♪

主人公のエーちゃんは　どんどんうま
なりますね。
勝木はというと　担当編集のCさんに
勝てる気配すらありません。（体力的にも…）
ちくしょー
この想いを漫画に込めて描いていきたいと
思います。

それではまた次巻で！

2ポイント　30（サーティ）
3ポイント　40（フォーティ）
4ポイント　ゲーム



45（フォーティファイブ）は
コールしにくいので
4a（フォーティ）と呼ばれた
という説が有力。

あなたは、この本を読んで、どのような感想をおもちになりましたか。

このほかに、「講談社コミックス」の中で、どんな本を読まれましたか。

このつぎには、どんな作家の、どんなまんがを読みたいとお考えですか。

コミックス編集の参考にさせていただきたいと思います。「読後の感想」と合わせて、左記のところあてにお知らせください。

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